



23-6

* THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, *
* Princeton, N. J. *

Case,

Division C

Shelf,

Section

Book,

No.

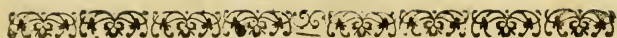
SCC

1897

v.1



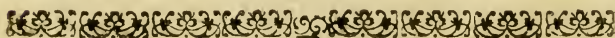




Lately Published,
Printed for C. RIVINGTON, in
St. Paul's Church-yard,

AN EXPOSITION ON the THIRTY NINE
ARTICLES of the Church of *England*.
Founded on the HOLY SCRIPTURES, and the
Fathers of the *Three First Centuries*. In
Two Volumes, 8vo. By J. VENEER,
Rector of *St. Andrew's in Chichester*. The
Second Edition, with Large Additions.

ANNOTATIONS ON the Book of *Job*, and
the *PSALMS*. Collected from several
Commentators, and Methodized and Im-
proved; by THOMAS FENTON,
M.A. Rector of *Nately-Scures in Hampshire*,
and sometime Student of *Christ-Church in*
Oxford.



E. Greenhill 2 Vol. 9.
REVELATION Examined
with CANDOUR.

OR, A FAIR
ENQUIRY
INTO THE
SENSE and USE
Of the Several
REVELATIONS

Exprefly Declared, or fufficiently Implied,
To be given to Mankind from the CREATION,
as they are found in the BIBLE.

By a profess'd Friend to an honeft Freedom of
Thought in Religious Enquiries. *J. Delany*

VOL. I. *By Patrick Delany.*

Containing Differtations on the following Subjects ; viz.

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. Of the Forbidden Fruit. | IX. Of the natural Cauſes made |
| II. Of the Knowledge of the Brute | use of by God to flood the Earth. |
| World conveyed to <i>Adam</i> . | X. Of the Ends of Divine Wiſdom |
| III. Of his Knowledge of Marriage. | answered by the Deluge. |
| IV. Of the Skill of Language in- | XI. Of the Objections to the <i>Mo-</i> |
| fused into <i>Adam</i> . | ſaic Account of the Deluge. |
| V. Of the Revelations immediately | XII. Of the Concurrence of all |
| following the Fall. | Antiquity with the <i>Mosaic</i> Ac- |
| VI. Of the <i>Mosaic</i> Account of the | count of the Flood. |
| Fall. | XIII. Of other Testimonies rela- |
| VII. Of Sacrifices. | ting to the Deluge. |
| VIII. Of the Corruptions of Man- | XIV. Of the Difficulties relating |
| kind, which caused the Deluge. | to <i>Noah's Ark</i> . |
-

The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. RIVINGTON, at the Bible and
Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard.

M. DCC. XXXIII.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

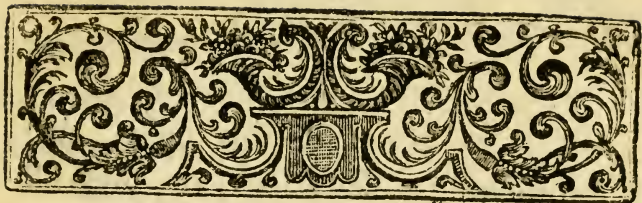
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
LIBRARY



TO THE
K I N G's
MOST EXCELLENT
M A J E S T Y.

May it please Your MAJESTY!



T is the birthright of Your Majesty's subjects of these realms, to address their Sovereign upon every exigency ; to petition, to inform, to complain ; and even, as far as decency will admit, or duty require, to advise.

IT is in virtue of this right, that the following dissertations, are, with all humility, presented to Your Majesty, from an author of no name ; who presumes not, to implore any degree of favour or protection, either to himself, or them ; the vanity or justice of that pretension, Your wisdom, and their worth, will best determine.

YOUR Majesty is call'd, by the Divine Providence, to the protection of a free people ; and constituted by the noblest of Your titles, *defender of the faith* ; and as these are the highest honours, to which mortality can aspire in this world, and the preservation of both, (in due dignity, and perfect consistency), the noblest privileges of power and prerogative : the support of such a conduct, will be the surest

ma-

manifestation of the wisdom of Your councils, and the moderation of Your government.

'TIS but too notorious, that a licentious spirit is gone out into the world; invading every thing, serious and sacred, with a rude effrontery, till now unknown! sapping the very foundations of religion, and in that, the best foundation of vertue, with all the infuriate violence of ignorance! and all the lawless rage of impotence! labouring, with every artifice of argument, every specious delusion of reason, and every bait of sensual indulgence, to seduce the soul, and pervert the will: and in consequence of both these, to subvert that *righteousness* which *exalteth a Nation*; and to introduce that *sin*, which is not only the sad *reproach*, but the sure ruin of

any people ; and which hath never fail'd from the foundation of the earth, (when once arrived to its height) to draw down the signal vengeance of God, in calamity, desolation, and destruction.

'TIS true, these bold champions of irreligion, have thus far merited of mankind ; they have banished hypocrisy ; and, had they stopped there, it were well : but it is the reproach of human frailty, to run into opposite extreams ; they have banished shame-faced hypocrisy, but they have established abandoned profaneness !

AND yet, on the other hand, to take away the liberty of the press, and the freedom of reason in matters of religion, would be to deprive *British* liberty of a valuable birthright, and
human

human reason of her noblest use! to protect obsolete error, and to rob truth! to rob her of her best advantage, and most distinguished honour! the honour of shining brightest upon the severest trials; and the advantage, of triumphing with most glory, after the hardiest contests, and most signal defeats of her obstinate enemies!

BUT after all, since the best temporary blessings, may be too dearly bought, or too soon defeated, and licentiousness long unrestrained, may, in the end, become unruly; and terminate in dreadful extremities; is there a conduct, that can better become the rulers of the earth, either in point of publick wisdom, or private interest, than timely to check and to restrain its progress?

MIGHT this be once numbered among the blessings of Your Majesty's reign ! might it be Your glory here, and Your eternal honour hereafter, to repress this increasing, this enormous evil !

NOR will it any way abate the merit of so glorious an undertaking, that the way to it is, neither dark nor difficult : that it may be compassed, with ease, and without reproach ; by *scorning the scorner*, after the example of God ! and shewing *grace* and favour to the *lowly* ; and by an open, avowed encouragement of learning, religion and vertue, in all orders and degrees of men : but especially in the clergy ;

SHALL Your Majesty, know it Your highest obligation, and your truest glory,

glory, to attend, with humility and reverence, upon the publick worship of God, and shall every abandoned miscreant revile that God with impunity! that God by whom you reign! Shall Your Majesty see it to be Your surest source of felicity, Your surest stay of power, and most indispenfible duty, to live in the avowed practice of every conjugal, every parental, every private, and every publick virtue: and shall virtue be reviled! Shall neither the veneration of the wisest, nor the practice of the best, nor the power of the greatest men, give it sanction and security?

TACITUS tells us, that in the degeneracy of the *Roman* Empire, vice became so reputable, that those who revered virtue in their hearts, did not

not dare to profess the least outward regard, for it.

O shame to *Christians*! open irreligion, the sure parent of every vice, and the sworn foe to every vertue, is now in the same height of reputation! which is not only a surer mark of degeneracy, but (what, methinks, should give some alarm to the most secure libertine) is, at least, as faithful an indication of approaching ruin, ——— if God, in his unmerited mercy, prevent it not.

EVIL rulers, have ever been able to render vice reputable; and cannot the righteous do as much for vertue? Is vertue (the greatest of all earthly blessings! the fairest and the loveliest of all human accomplishments!) the only thing, which power cannot render

der honourable? which majesty cannot manifest to be lovely? nor courts, becoming? Can the highest examples only influence to evil! God forbid; -- this were to strip grandeur of its noblest prerogative, as well as its truest and richest interest! Let a prince hear the advice of a prince, (the wisest of earthly rulers!) upon this head; *Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer: take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.*

DREAD Sir! it needs little sagacity to see, that the best security of a throne, is its best ornament! Without a right sense of religion, servants are sycophants; guards, keepers; and attendants, enemies in pay.

WOULD

WOULD Your Majesty live secure,
 and reign glorious; be ignorance de-
 spised, and immorality detested! be
 open profaneness as openly discouraged;
 and lewd scurrility upon sacred sub-
 jects, upon the highest interests of rea-
 sonable beings, effectually repressed!
 if not with all that rigour of chastise-
 ment, which misguided zeal may re-
 quire; yet, at least, with all that just
 contempt and indignation, which true
 religion must exact! which wisdom
 recommends, and interest demands:
 — And let the vertue of this conduct
 be yet heightened, by that just esteem,
 and honourable distinction, steadily
 conferred upon true piety; upon piety
 enlarged, and enlightened, as it ought;
 enlightened with useful learning, of
 every kind; and enlarged into a true
 concern for the temporal, and eternal
 interests

interests of human-kind ; — and the sincerity of such a disposition, will best be seen, when it exerts itself, with all the openness of honesty, with all the patience of charity, and with all the courage of conviction, in a steady opposition to error, and defence of truth.

So shall Your Majesty effectually be, what You are so gloriously titled ! remembring always, that it is the noblest prerogative of *a king that sitteth on the throne of judgment*, that he *scattereth away all evil with his eyes !* that he is then, truly the substitute of the supream Sovereign, when the righteous are honour'd in his presence, and *the vile contemned.*

T H A T

THAT this may ever be Your Majesty's true character, and constant employment ; and that God may long preserve You in it ; that of his infinite goodness, he may crown You with lasting glory here, and endless felicity hereafter, is the constant and sincere prayer of,

YOUR MAJESTY'S


Most dutiful and most devoted

Subject and Servant.



T H E

P R E F A C E.

 *HE reader is desired to take notice, that the word revelation, is, in the following dissertations, taken in a very extensive sense: to signify every interposition of the Divine Providence in the government of the world, out of the ordinary established course of nature.*

IT may be thought, perhaps, that I should make some apology to the world, for troubling them with any thing relating to religion; (which seemeth, at present, more the subject of light contempt, than real concern); especially such points of it, as have so often been treated before, and by so many able pens; but so far am I from thinking I need an apology, that, I imagine, I shall have some degree of merit with the reader, if I can entertain him with something new, upon so dry a subject: Novelty, being at present, in writings of all sorts, (next to irreligion) the reigning merit! and novelty upon a subject so obsolete, and so seemingly exhausted, will, I hope, be allowed a more than common merit. And, indeed, the scriptures seem to me, a field,
which

which hath hitherto been rendered, in some respects, rather barren, than fruitful, by culture: (tho' in itself infinitely the richest and the noblest of all others) or, if fruitful of salutary food, to the humble, (which it yielded sufficiently without culture) yet to the proud, in no eminently better degree, than the earth under the curse; fruitful for the most part, in thorns and thistles!

IT must be owned, that much reading and erudition, together with immense labour, have been laid out on the bible, since the restoration of learning; and yet in reality, all this, hath hitherto amounted to little more, than clearing the way, and preparing proper materials, for men of genius. The human progress to perfection, is, and ever must

a 2

be

be, slow; and that which is most eagerly desired, must be last expected.

FOR my own part, I must own, that with all human vanity about me, I can consider the following dissertations, but as so many struggles of an industrious man, thro' a thicket; which serve at first, but to let in a little glimmering light; I shall not, however, esteem my labour lost, if I have let in enough, to prepare the pupil, for a fuller admission of the day, from the subsequent efforts of more resolution and strength.

THE misfortune is, the best studies, and most desirable knowledge are now almost out of date: learning is remarkably in the decline; and of necessity must decline, in proportion, as the present groveling, giddy, frivolous spirit of infidelity, (the bane of every thing ar-
duous

duous and excellent) prevails; it being evident, that the only wisdom upon the infidel's principles is this; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.

HENCE *the true cause of the growth of luxury among us, as among the Romans, in the decline of the common-wealth, upon the spreading of Epicurus's principles. — Luxury, together with other vices, begets sloth; sloth, ignorance; and ignorance in a vitiated mind, is the sure parent of infidelity. And as there are fashions in opinions, as in other things, infidelity is now among the reigning vanities of life! but the vanities of this life, pass away! and fleet fast into their opposite extremes. — Infidelity is now predominant; but, perhaps, the justest fear*

upon this head, is, that superstition will soon succeed it.

STRANGE paradox! *the true parent of infidelity, is ignorance; and yet it's vaunted origine, is the pride of knowledge! but with this disadvantage; that it is only knowledge of evil. For all knowledge of good, all true and valuable learning in the world, is indisputably on the side of revelation. It is a melancholly reflection! ---- the present pride of infidelity is knowledge! but it's only plea at the last, will be ignorance.*

IT must indeed be owned, *that the modern patrons of infidelity, have some learning; English translations, and English divines, are familiar to them; but the misfortune is, that they fix,*
not

not upon their excellencies, but their errors; and so error is made the test of truth.

IT hath often been observed by the wisest men, that nothing is so dangerous in any science, as a little learning: a little light, from the false or imperfect view it gives of the noblest objects, is apt to inspire contempt, from ignorance; and vanity, from contempt: when a fuller gleam, exhibiting perfection and excellence in a true light, and a fairer proportion, inspireth admiration, and confusion of face; admiration, from excellence; and confusion, from the remembrance of past arrogance. A slender portion of knowledge, shews only our acquisitions, which make us vain; a larger, displays our wants, and makes us humble.

IT is the observation, of that great honour of England, and of human nature, the Lord BACON; that a little learning inclineth mens minds to Atheism, but depth in it brings them about again to religion. *What is true of science in general, is more remarkably so, in relation to divinity; where, as there is more room for true wisdom, there is more range for folly. Tho' the truth is, it is hard to say which is most ruinous in this point, slender knowledge, or downright ignorance; the infidel world, (if you except some few men of genius, hurried away by vanity, ambition, imagination, and sensual pursuits) being, for the most part, divided but into two classes: men of little learning, and men of none. Their acquisitions are unequal;*

equal; but their capacity and conceit the same.

How lamentable a prospect is human vanity, in this view! A man, whose conceit sets him above submitting to plain truths, and reasonable evidence, is in a desperate way! the same pride, which shuts his eyes upon the clearest points, but too often determines him upon the darkest. Conducted thus, by vanity, and ignorance, whilst the blind, leads the blind, it is impossible, but that he must fall into the pit. Happy, if his fall convinces him of his folly, before it concludes in his ruin!

THAT men should rejoice in that light, which it hath pleased God to diffuse upon the human soul, is but right, and reasonable; but that men
should

should reject that glorious light, which came down from heaven, to be led wholly by their own, is just as wise, as it would be, to prefer a glimmering taper, to the sun in his glory! is in truth, to prefer comparative darkness! a conduct, which can only be ascribed to weak eyes, or a wicked heart. Men love darkness better than light, because their deeds are evil! and yet, tho' the present condition of the world, is, in truth, a melancholly prospect in the eye of true piety, ----- (for what can be more melancholly, than to see wisdom insulted by folly! and reasonable beings play with perdition!) yet I can't help thinking, that it is a prospect, which sometimes shews itself to the most serious eye, in a ludicrous light: who, that beholds the present mad insults of irreligion, can sometimes forbear imagining

gining to himself, the mock-triumph of Caligula, for the spoils of the ocean? Men glory in their shame, because they see it not; and nothing but more light, can bring them to their senses.

IF what is here endeavoured, shall be deemed sufficient, to humble this shameful insolence of infidelity, and to take away all pretence to triumph, from imagined absurdity, or inconsistency, in the most exceptionable parts of revelation, my end is answered: — That enough is done to this purpose, I shall not scruple to pronounce; at least, if I have any idea of truth, or evidence. And methinks there is no mighty vanity, in any man's imagining that he hath; inasmuch as it requires no vast talents, beyond common sense,

sense, in any man conversant in rational disquisitions, to distinguish plain truth from manifest falsehood, by their common and known marks and characters. ----

In truth, there is no more vanity in this, than in imagining that he can distinguish light from darkness, or men from monsters! and if there is not, I will take upon me to say, that whatever I have offered for evidence in the following treatise, is such. —

*That the necessity of revelation, the truth of the Mosaic history, and the absurdity of the objections made to it, are, in many instances, as clearly proved, in the following dissertations, as any theorem in Euclid; by axioms, as evident, by propositions, as plain, and by deductions, as clear; consequently, that infidelity here (after a
fair*

fair examination of the points so discuss'd) is as irrational, as dissent, there. But if any man imagines otherwise, and shall think fit to arraign my reasonings, of fallacy or falshood, his wisest way, if he intends nothing but his own conviction, and the triumph of truth, will be, to try his sagacity, in detecting, and his strength, in confuting them; which I thus publicly and earnestly entreat and exhort all such to do; ----- and which, if they attempt to do, by any other method, than that of fair reasoning, I desire them before-hand to take notice, that, as I shall make no other return than the contempt of silence, so every candid man must consider such proceeding, in them, as a confessed defeat.

I SPEAK

I SPEAK *this, in the spirit of a man, who speaks from conviction; and hath no other interest but that of truth: which feareth not to be brought to the test of reason, ----- and which is often, not more promoted, by the best arguments of it's advocates, than by the determined opposition of it's enemies, ----- the enemies of every thing virtuous and valuable in this world! for after all; ----- whatever specious pretences the present oppositions to religion may carry with them, they are in effect, but the dispute of Darius's young men * revived. ----- And however the cause of wine and women*

* Esdras iii.

(the vanities and pleasures of life) may prevail for a season, must end, as that did, in favour of truth. Truth endureth, and is always strong; it liveth, and conquereth, for ever more.





REVELATION EXAMINE

By the Rev. J. H. ...
of the ...

...
...
...
...
...

...
...
...
...
...



REVELATION

EXAMINED, &c.

DISSERTATION I.

Of the forbidden Fruit.



SHALL begin with the first revelation given to *Adam* in paradise, as you will find it in the second chapter of *Genesis*, at the 16th and 17th verses—

16. AND *the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.*

17. *BUT of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

NOTHING could be more agreeable to the wisdom and goodness of God, than to provide plenty of proper food for all the creatures he had formed; but as these creatures were of very various natures, and consequently what was proper food for one, might be very improper food for another, *Adam* must, in this case, be under great difficulties, without some direction from God: for supposing that he had a right to make use of any food that came in his way, without an express grant from his Maker, (as I think it evident he had not) it would, however, be irrational in him, to run the risque of taking any food, which might not only be improper, but pernicious to him; and, without some direction from God, it was impossible for him to know what food was proper, otherwise than by examining the nature of his own constitution, and the nature of the several fruits before him, and the suitability of each to the other; and how this could be done in that state is utterly inconceivable, otherwise than by experiment; and the experiment might have been as fatal to him, as it hath since been to many of his posterity;

posterity ; great numbers of whom have been destroyed, by fruits apparently fair and inviting. And therefore, as the wisdom and goodness of God were engaged in the preservation of his own creature (for otherwise the very first object he met, might have defeated all the ends of his creation) the same attributes necessarily required that he should be informed how to preserve his being, and cautioned how he might impair or destroy it.

If you suppose his senses were so perfect, that he could, by their assistance alone, certainly distinguish what food was salutary, and what noxious, you must at the same time suppose him formed in much more perfection than any of his posterity ; and if that is allowed, the truth of revelation is so far established ; and if it is not allowed, 'tis a demonstration that revelation in this case was necessary ; — necessary, as the wisdom and the goodness of God : Let the adversaries of revealed religion chuse which part of this dilemma they like best.

Now as reason shews, that this grant and this revelation were, as far as we can conceive, necessary, scripture assures us that they were made ; for we are told in the first chapter of *Genesis*, that when *Adam* was created, God gave him a right to every herb

4 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

and tree upon the face of the earth; and when he translated him into paradise, we are assured, that he gave him free permission to eat the fruit of every tree in the garden, except one; and that he added the reason of that restraint, because the eating the fruit of that tree would be pernicious to him; *for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; or, as it is in the original, *dying thou shalt die*; i. e. you shall certainly contract a mortal infirmity: now, forasmuch as a man who hath a mortal infirmity upon him, is, in truth, in a dying condition, he may from that moment be strictly and properly said to be dying.—Whereas then, as I have observed to you, reason demonstrates that this revelation was necessary, and scripture shews it to be made; here is a new argument of the truth of scripture; for what can be a clearer demonstration of the truth of any writing, than demonstrating it to be perfectly conformable to the necessary truth and nature of things?

IF it be asked, why *Adam* was not supernaturally endowed with the knowledge of food as well as of animals? — I answer, that for ought we know so he was: this history is very short, possibly he was fully informed of all plants and fruits, but certainly he was of that on which his own well-being, and that of his posterity, depended.

BUT

BUT here we are asked by infidels, with high insults upon our credulity and ignorance, how it was possible that eating the fruit of a tree could destroy the supposed perfection of *Adam's* nature? make him blind, and vitious, and miserable; and, what is more absurd than all this, entail guilt and misery upon his latest posterity?

IN answer to this, I cannot but own, that these difficulties have perplexed the ablest heads of all ages; since the curiosity and vanity of men have urged them more to canvas the ways of infinite wisdom with arrogance, than to submit to them with humility; and yet more enlarged observations upon the laws of God in the government of the world, added to some late discoveries in the knowledge of nature, will, I hope, enable us to give all these difficulties such clear and rational solutions, as may be sufficient to subdue any unreasonableness less than that of infidelity, to the end of the world.

I NEED not be at much pains to inform the reader, that the sin of our first parents consisted in their indulging an irregular appetite, in order to obtain a higher degree of knowledge, contrary to the express command of God. Now I ask, Is it any way

6 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

inconsistent with the divine wisdom and goodness, to punish this abuse of reason, by impairing the powers of that very faculty they had so wantonly abused? or to punish the indulgence of irregular appetites in our first parents, by giving them up to irregular appetites for the rest of their lives? and in this case, 'tis evident, they would naturally become vicious, and miserable, and involve their posterity in the necessary consequences of their own guilt and folly.

WE see it now an establishment of God in the nature and constitution of things, that all irregular indulgence of our appetites is attended with evil; and that every such indulgence makes those appetites yet more irregular. — We also see it established in the nature of things, that all vain and unreasonable pursuits of superior wisdom, all pride of knowledge, naturally tend to impair the powers of the mind, by taking off the thoughts from their proper objects, and by giving them false and fantastic views; and in consequence of this, seldom fail to end, either in downright madness, or specious folly. Now, why in the appointment of God, the search of forbidden knowledge, by an irregular indulgence in forbidden fruit, should not have any or all these effects, tho' out of the ordinary course, or present state of things, I believe all the deists in

in the world will find it hard to explain; unless they think it impossible that any other than the present establishment could ever have subsisted: or if there could, unless they think it reasonable, that God Almighty should suspend his laws, and over-rule his own established order of nature, in favour of *Adam* and *Eve*, who were, at least in this point, the most unpardonable delinquents that ever were in the world.

BUT if it be said, that transgressing the commandment of God in this instance, is punished with more than the ordinary penalty of indulging an irregular appetite; I answer, that allowing it to be so, the penalty of the first transgression, should in wisdom and in justice, be greater than that of any subsequent transgression; because all depended upon the first; as also to deter all posterity, and to let them see, by this example, that whatever penalty God denounces against guilt, will infallibly be executed.

BUT this point will be yet more fully cleared, upon the principles of natural knowledge; (even without supposing any establishment different from the present, excepting that man was then in the perfection in which it best became infinite wisdom and goodness to create him.)

8 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

WE know there are several fruits in several parts of the world, of so noxious a nature, as to destroy the best human constitution upon earth. We also know very well, that there are some fruits in the world which inflame the blood into fevers and phrenzies — And we are told, that the *Indians* are acquainted with a certain juice, which immediately turns the person who drinks it into an idiot; leaving him at the same time in the enjoyment of his health, and all the powers of his body; — Now I ask, whether it is not possible, nay, whether it is not rational to believe, that the same fruit, which, in the present infirmity of nature, would utterly destroy the human constitution, might, in the highest perfection we can imagine it, at least disturb, and impair, and disease it? and whether the same fruit which would now inflame any man living into a fever or phrenzy, might not inflame *Adam* into a turbulence and irregularity of passion and appetite? and whether the same fluids which inflame the blood into irregularity of passion and appetite, may not naturally produce infection, and impair the constitution? also, whether the same juice, which now so affects the brain of an ordinary man, as to make him an idiot, might not so affect the brain of *Adam*, as to bring his understanding down to the present standard of ordinary men? and

if

if this be possible, and not absurd to be supposed, 'tis evident the subsequent ignorance and corruption of human nature may clearly be accounted for upon these suppositions; — nay, I had almost said upon any one of them? for the perfection of human nature consisting in the dominion of reason over the passions and appetites, whatever destroyed the absoluteness of that dominion, whether by inflaming the passions, or impairing the powers of reason, must of necessity destroy the perfection of human nature; and, in consequence of that, produce sin, guilt, and misery in *Adam*; and entail it upon his posterity.

ALL mankind were in *Adam*. — The knowledge of nature proves this to be true. And we well know that the infections and infirmities of the father, affect the children yet in his loins; and if the mother be equally infected, must, unless removed by proper remedies, affect their posterity to the end of the world: — or, at least, till the infection extinguishes the race affected with it. Therefore, why all mankind might not by their first father's sin be reduced to the same condition of infirmity and corruption with himself, (especially when the mother was equally infirm and infected) I believe no man, any way skilled in the knowledge of nature, will so much as pretend to say. — And if
it

it is not absurd and irrational to suppose, that this might be done, certainly it can neither be absurd or irrational to believe that it was done: especially when we believe it, upon the credit of the wisest, the most authentic, the best attested history in the whole world, except that of the gospels; a history confirmed by the oldest, the most credible, and the most authentic traditions of all antiquity; and, what is yet more, confirmed beyond all reasonable doubt, by the very reason, and nature, and truth of things: — and in the present case, confirmed beyond all possibility of doubt, by the testimony of all ages, and by the experience of every man living upon the face of the earth; — as shall be shewn hereafter.





DISSERTATION II.

Concerning the knowledge of the brute world conveyed to Adam.



NOTHER revelation necessary to *Adam* in the state of innocence, was the nature of the several creatures formed for his use. — And another, to be assured that God had given him dominion over them.

First, IT was necessary for him to know the nature of the several creatures made for his use, otherwise it was impossible he could use them to any good or reasonable purpose; and 'tis a necessary consequence from the wisdom and goodness of God, that when he bestows any right upon any of his creatures, he should endow them with the means of enjoying it; and 'tis evident, that if *Adam* was created under all the present infirmities

infirmities and necessities of human nature, he must be miserable for a long course of years; nay, probably he might perish, before he could find out by his own sagacity the fitness of the several creatures, to supply the several necessities and conveniencies of human life; or, having found it, to be able, by the force of his own strength and wisdom, with no other than the assistance of his wife, to subdue and apply those creatures to the several ends and uses for which they were ordained by God. At least it hath cost his posterity much pains to this purpose, tho' assisted by numbers, and advantaged by all the inventions of art. It hath exhausted the wisdom of many successive generations, to arrive at a through improvement and information in these points; and yet no man of common learning believes them to be fully attained to this day. — And is it any way agreeable to the ideas we have of the divine beneficence, to believe, that God would leave his innocent creatures, so long destitute of so many comforts and conveniencies of life, or suffer them to pine and perish for want of them? Mortals, ill-inform'd of the benignity and perfection of the divine Being, may give up their belief to such absurdities; but, God be praised, Christians know better things.

THE sum of the argument is this; if *Adam* was created under the present infirmities and necessities

necessities of human nature, he must have been long miserable, perhaps to the last moment of his life, without the knowledge of the nature and uses of the several creatures. — 'Tis inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God, to suffer him to be miserable, or perish innocent ; and therefore 'tis a necessary consequence from the wisdom and goodness of God, that he was informed of these points as soon as it was necessary, *i. e.* as soon as he was created. — And to this end, 'tis evident, that either God must have endowed him with such exceeding sagacity and penetration as to discern the natures of all animals at first sight, and then *Moses's* account of this matter is literally true:—Or else, he must convey this knowledge to him by an express revelation. Let the adversaries of revealed religion also take which side of this dilemma they like best.

THE next revelation necessary to *Adam* at this time, was, that God had given him dominion over the creatures ; for to what purpose would it have been to him, to have known the natures of the several beings about him, and their fitness to minister to his satisfactions, and to serve the necessities and conveniences of his life, if he could not be assured at the same time that he had a right to apply them to those ends ? and 'tis certain that fitness could not infer right, *i. e.* the

14 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

the fitness in one creature to serve the ends of another, infers no right in that other to apply that creature to his own uses; and all the casuists upon earth will never be able to demonstrate, that he had a right so much as to the milk of a cow, without an express grant from God. — It was absolutely necessary therefore that God Almighty should give him a right to the creatures; and not only so, but should give him dominion over them: such a dominion as should imply awe and submission in them, and authority and rule in him; otherwise 'tis impossible to say, why the first lion or tyger that met him, should not at the same time devour him; or the first cow, or horse, or elephant he attempted to tame, should not gore, or trample, or tear him to pieces.

I BESEECH the candid and thinking reader to consider, what must the condition of a man sent into the world in the midst of so many savage creatures, prone and enabled to destroy him, if those creatures were not at the same time restrained: 'tis evident, that without this, he must be miserable beyond imagination; and that no man of common sense would take life upon those terms, even now, with all the advantage of arts and arms; to be the only man upon the globe, encompassed with brutes and savages, ready and able to devour and destroy him. — And much less would he
accept

accept of life upon the terms of being placed naked and defenceless in those circumstances. And 'tis as evident, that what a man of common sense would not take, a being of infinite goodness would not give to a reasonable creature, upon those terms. — And therefore, as certain as it can be, that God is infinitely wise and good, so certain is it, that when he sent man into the world, naked and defenceless, he placed him in it in full assurance of security from the creatures, and dominion over them. And consequently *Moses's* account of this matter, in the first chapter of *Genesis*, is demonstrably true; where he tells us, that as soon as God had declared his resolution to make man in his own image, he decreed them dominion over all the other creatures. — And accordingly we are assured, that as soon as *Adam* and *Eve* were created, *God blessed them; and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* — And as nothing could so fully satisfy *Adam*, that he was in full possession of this dominion, as bringing the creatures before him, and letting him see his own authority, and their submission, which he could not but see by their behaviour on that occasion) we are assured from the scriptures that they
were

16 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

were brought before him; and that he gave them names, which the knowledge of the *Hebrew* shews us to be significant of their natures; from whence we infer, that God gave him also a clear insight into their several characters, and qualities, and uses, as far as was necessary to his well-being; and that such knowledge was necessary to his well-being, I have already shewn.

BUT here it may be objected, that if *Adam* and *Eve* were so thoroughly informed in the nature of the creatures, how was it possible that the serpent could deceive beings of such superior abilities?

IN answer to this, I shall omit the various opinions of Doctors and Rabbi's on this head, and barely mention that which is most natural and obvious from the scripture.

EVE very well knew that the serpent, tho' subtil, was yet denied the use of reason and speech; and therefore, when she saw him endowed with both, and heard him attribute these perfections to the vertue of the forbidden fruit, it was easy for her to conclude thus with herself, that if the vertue of that fruit was so wonderful, as to make the serpent rational from brute, 'twas probable enough it might raise her from rational to divine; and this was such a temptation

tation as reason could not easily resist, as shall be shewn hereafter. — 'Tis true, this matter is related shortly, and, to our present capacities, somewhat obscurely in the scripture; but, if we consider, that the human understanding was much more perfect before the fall; and that in this perfection it was easy to learn the speaker's thoughts from a short hint, without the toil of those long and laborious deductions, which our present dullness hath made necessary; we shall find that the serpent had no need to speak one word more than he is said to do on this occasion. Nay, if he had spoken more, he might have defeated his design; by letting *Eve* see that he had not attained to all that sagacity he pretended to, by eating the forbidden fruit. In short, this conference is a specimen of that short sagacious reasoning, which human nature was capable of in its perfection. And as I am fully satisfied that the serpent had no need of saying one word more to *Eve* on this occasion, than is here recorded; so I think it evident, that *Moses*, in relating no more than what was said, hath discharged the part of a faithful historian; which he would not have done, had he related one word more.

AND, in order to clear this, I shall again repeat this position; that the perfection of our understanding in this world is knowledge

18 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

by hints, or simple propositions; as the perfection of our understanding in the next, will be knowledge by intuition. And whoever is any-way conversant in history, or hath conversed with any sagacity himself, cannot but know, that nothing is more common than to discern a whole train of thoughts by one word, — nay, by a look, — a sigh, or even a motion of the head or hand. — And what hath so much distinguished the abilities of Sir *Isaac Newton*, and some other men of great genius to the world, as their perception of very new and remote truths, from very simple principles, which others, even when discovered, could not attain, without a long train of consequences; at least, what could raise their abilities so high in our esteem, as if we could be satisfied they were capable of such perception? And this being granted, 'tis evident that the reasoning I have mentioned on this head, is clearly deducible from the conversation between the serpent and the woman, mentioned on this occasion; as you may read in the third chapter of *Genesis*: especially when we consider the clear connection between this conversation and the precedent command of abstinence given by God, which made an ampler account of this matter less necessary; — the words are as follow; *And he said unto the woman, Yea, bath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* — Or

rather, as it is in the original, *Yea, because God hath said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. — And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; because God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.*

Now whoever attends carefully to these words, will find these three points clearly contain'd in them:

First, THAT the serpent had some way or other invited *Eve* to eat of that fruit, probably by expressing great rapture and transport upon tasting it himself, and that notwithstanding she refused so much as to touch it; and signified the reason of her refusal, because it was forbidden under pain of death.

Secondly, THAT he ridicules that reason, and assigns another reason.

AND *Thirdly*, that she is confirmed in the truth of that other reason, from the serpent's experiment, and so eats the fruit.

First, IT appears that the serpent had some way or other invited *Eve* to eat of that fruit, and that notwithstanding she refused so much as to touch it. All this is plainly implied in the serpent's first question; — *Yea, because God hath said, Ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?* — Now this question plainly implies a reproach upon a refusal; and such a reproach plainly implies an application made and rejected. — For what can be clearer than that the meaning of these words is plainly this? — What, you refuse to eat of this tree, because God hath not allowed you to eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. — Now, that this is the meaning of the serpent's words, is evident from *Eve's* reply, wherein she corrects the reason assigned by the serpent, and assigns the true reason of her refusal. For this reply evidently implies these four things;

First, THAT application had been made to her to eat that fruit.

Secondly, THAT she refused so much as to touch it, and assigned the reason of that refusal; because God had forbidden it.

Thirdly, THAT the serpent pretended to mistake that reason.

AND *fourthly*, That she corrects his pretended mistake, and assigns the true reason of her refusal; and all these inferences are founded upon this plain axiom:

A reply correcting the wrong reason of a refusal assigned by the adversary, and assigning the right, — implies these four things. — 1st, That an application was made. — 2dly, That it was rejected for a certain reason. — 3dly, That this reason was affectedly or ignorantly mistaken by the adversary. — And 4thly, That this mistake was corrected in the reply, and the true reason assigned.

AND forasmuch as there is a plain insinuation against the goodness of God, in the serpent's question; as if God had made something which was not good; or, at least, had withheld something that was good, nay, which was the best of all the good things he had made, from them, and consequently was not so bountiful and beneficent, as they might think him; she in her answer vindicates the goodness of God; and adds the reason of his forbidding them that fruit, — *viz. lest ye die*, i. e. because it would certainly be destructive to them; she knew very well that

that the fruit might be good, and answer many excellent ends of providence, and yet be destructive to them. Now that apprehension the tempter ridicules, by affirming, in an insolent irony, and in the direct contradiction of God's own words, *Ye shall not surely die*; and then adds what he would insinuate to be the true reason of God's prohibition, — *Because God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*, that was the reason that God forbid you to eat it.

Now the difficulty here, is, how the tempter could take upon him to pronounce this so peremptorily, — or why *Eve* should believe him when he did?

THE answer to this is obvious. *Eve* saw him eat the fruit, as I shall shew immediately, and that he eat it to his great advantage, and not to his destruction, and therefore it was probable she might do so too.

Now upon supposition that *Eve* saw him eat it, without any ill consequence, the question which would then naturally arise in her mind, was this; If this fruit is not destructive to life, as 'tis plain from the serpent that it is not, why did God forbid us to eat it? — To this doubt, which it was
easy

easy for the serpent to foresee would arise in her mind, and to observe by her countenance that it had arisen there, he gives a plain and plausible answer; — *Because*, says he, (for so the word is in the *Hebrew* (*God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* — As if he had said, You are at a loss to know, if this tree is not destructive, why God hath forbidden you to eat it: — The answer is plain; He forbade you, because he knew that your eating it would raise you up to the perfections of his own nature.

Now that *Eve* was confirmed in the truth of this reason by the serpent's experiment, appears plainly from the words immediately following, — which are these, *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, — and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat.* Now from these words I clearly conclude, that *Eve* saw the serpent eat the forbidden fruit, and ascribed his speech and knowledge to the eating of it; — and this conclusion I found upon this plain axiom;

WHOEVER declares a certain knowledge of a truth which can only be had by experiment, declares a certain knowledge that that experi-

24 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ment was made. — Now *Eve* could plainly know from her senses, that the fruit was desirable to the eye, but it was impossible she could know that it was good for food but from the example and experiment of the serpent. It was also impossible she could know that it was desirable to make wise, but by the example of the serpent; whom she saw from a brute become a rational and vocal creature, as she thought by eating that fruit. — The text says, *she saw it was good for food, and that it was desirable to make wise.* And seeing, does not imply conjecture or belief, but certain knowledge, — knowledge founded upon evidence and proof; such proof as she had then before her eyes. — And when once we are sure that she had this proof, as 'tis evident she had, the whole conference between her and the serpent is as rational and intelligible, as any thing in the whole scriptures.

BUT here it is objected, that *Eve* expresses no such thing as fear or surprize on so strange an event, as that of a brute's speaking to her, which naturally should happen; and consequently this relation is incredible on that account.

IN answer to this, I beseech these objectors seriously to reflect, whether human nature is now in such native perfection, as to be able
to

to answer and attain the true ends of such a being as man is ; that it is not now in such perfection, needs little sagacity to see, or ingenuity to own ; that it was so in its original formation, no way misbecomes the best philosophy to believe ; forasmuch as it is apparently a necessary consequence from the infinite wisdom and goodness of God. Now 'tis evident, that, in such a state, reason must enjoy a calm dominion ; and consequently, that there was no room for those sudden starts of imagination, or those sudden tumults, agitations, failures, and stagnations of the blood and spirits, now incident to human nature ; and therefore *Eve* was incapable of fear or surprize from such accidents as would disquiet the best of her posterity. — This objection then is so far from prejudicing the truth of the *Mosaic* history, that, to me, I own, 'tis a strong presumption in its favour.

BUT after all, if this objection has yet any weight with my reader, I beseech him to consider what there is in this philosophic serenity of our first parent, (supposing the whole of her conduct on this occasion fully related to us) so far exceeding the serenity of *Fabrizius*, upon the sudden appearance and cry of the elephant contrived by *Pyrrhus* to discompose him ; or the steadiness of *Brutus* upon the appearance of his evil genius? —
and

26 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

and yet, I believe, *Plutarch* no way suffers in his credit, as an historian, by the relation of those events; at least, had he related those surprizing accidents, without saying one word of what effects they had upon the passions of the persons concerned, his relations had certainly been liable to no imputation of incredibility, or even improbability upon that account.

Now let the wisest of mankind imagine himself in *Eve's* condition, I would ask such a one, If a brute should accost him with the same power of speech, and strength of reason, and should ascribe both to the same cause that the serpent did, whether so powerful a temptation would not, in all probability, influence him to the same transgression? If then, there be nothing absurd, or impossible, or unphilosophical, in supposing that the organs of a brute could be so acted by the influence of a superior intelligence, as there evidently is not; then is there plainly nothing absurd, impossible, or incredible in this whole account of the conference between *Eve* and the serpent; nay, so far otherwise, that, as it is now explained, I will be bold to say, 'tis the most rational scheme of deception, and the best fitted to work its end, that the subtlest of all created spirits can be conceived capable of devising on the occasion; — nay more, that the whole

whole of this account is incomparably more agreeable to reason and philosophy, and, consequently, more credible, than any one article of the *Freethinker's* faith, as it is contradistinguished from the *Christian's*.





DISSERTATION III.

Of the knowledge of marriage given to Adam.

Proceed now to consider another revelation necessary to *Adam* in a state of innocence; and that was a revelation of marriage according to the law of nature; or, in other words, that God had ordained, that one man should be inseparably united to one woman.

Now that this knowledge was necessary to *Adam*, I believe the adversaries of revelation will not deny; when they consider, that this inseparable union of one man with one woman in marriage, is a law of nature, as I shall hereafter prove it to be; and they themselves own that the knowledge of the law of nature is necessary, in order to a due discharge of duty. Now that *Adam* knew this to be such, is evident

dent from these words in the second chapter of *Genesis*, pronounced by him at the instant that God gave the woman unto him, v. 23. *And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.* 24. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.*

THAT *Adam* should have a perfect idea of father and mother, before there was any such thing as a father or a mother in the world, ---should have clear ideas of the affection and endearment arising from that relation, and yet should see clearly that the affection and endearment arising from marriage should yet get the better of these ties, so as to attach a man nearer to a stranger taken to his breast, than to those very parents whose blood ran in his veins, and who gave him his very life; is a problem which will puzzle all the infidels of the world to explain in a natural way; or to account for from any supposition of sagacity or penetration in the human mind, or from any principle whatsoever but express revelation; at least if the received doctrines of philosophy be true, that the senses are the inlets of ideas, and that we can have no ideas without objects; that the mind, tho' it can compare and combine, yet cannot create ideas of any kind; nor form any, but from the perceptions

30 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ceptions of its own operations, and the objects of sense. Now ideas of parents and children, and the relation arising from thence; when there was no such thing as parents or children in the world, were to *Adam* plainly ideas without objects; ideas of parental affection in a man who never had been a parent, nor ever seen the effects of that affection in another; ideas also of filial affection in one who never had been a son, of contending with that affection, of conquering it, and preferring another to it, are perceptions which it was impossible *Adam* could naturally have, from perceiving the operations of his own mind; because it is impossible his mind could naturally operate in that manner; and therefore, since it is plain that he had these ideas, and had them not from nature, 'tis evident he must have them from revelation.

AGAIN, How was it possible for *Adam* to know, that God Almighty intended that the union of man and wife should be perpetual, should be as lasting and inseparable as the union of parts in the same body, which nothing but death or destruction can separate? for so these words plainly signify, *and they shall be one flesh.*

HE knew indeed that *Eve* and he were literally one flesh; but he knew at the same time, that succeeding pairs should not be so;
that

that wives were to be provided for all other men in a natural way; this is evident from these words, *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife*; and yet how he should take upon him to affirm, that their union with their husbands should be as inseparable, by the appointment of God, in the nature of things, as if they were actually one flesh, is impossible to be accounted for in a natural way.

WE all know that property was established in the world as a fence against the corruption of human nature, and therefore it is rational to believe, that in a state of innocence there would have been a community of all the common conveniencies and necessities of life: nor could reason antecedently demonstrate a necessity of establishing a strict invariable property in this instance above any other; especially when the ends of society might in many cases be seemingly better answered, by an allowance of more liberty in this point: as in the case of accidental barrenness from too great a difference of temperament in the married pair, --- or any accidental defect happening after marriage in either party.---Now the ends of marriage would in appearance be better answered, by leaving either or both parties at liberty in these cases to make another choice; especially at a time when the perfection of human reason, and rectitude of
the

the will, precluded all danger of that liberty's being abused. --- And therefore 'tis evident, that *Adam* could not know that God Almighty had thus ordained, otherwise than by an exprefs revelation. --- It was impossible for him to know, without revelation, in what proportion his offspring of each sex would be propagated: or that the number of each should for ever bear a certain determinate proportion to one another, as it certainly does; and, that that proportion would demonstrate the justice and the necessity of one man's being allowed a property in no more than one woman; and that infinite evils would accrue to mankind in their fallen condition, as it is evident there would, from establishing this property only for a limited time; or making the continuance of it arbitrary, or determinable at the discretion of either or both parties; and since it was absolutely impossible for *Adam* to know all this, (for in truth nothing less than infinite wisdom could know it,) 'tis evident he could not take upon him to pronounce, that this should be the state of marriage, but by exprefs revelation from God; (nay, 'tis evident, that even *Moses* knew it not) and this reasoning clearly confirms the truth of our Saviour's explication of this passage in the 19th chapter of St. *Matthew's* gospel, 4th, 5th, and 6th verses, where he tells us, that the words pronounced by *Adam* on this occasion, were the declaration of God himself;---

And

And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them in the beginning, made them male and female? and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Here you find, that the declaration ascribed by *Moses* to *Adam*, is ascribed by *Christ* to *God*; from whence it is evident, that the declaration which *Adam* made on this occasion, was in consequence of an express revelation from *God*.— Which was the thing to be proved. And here 'tis well worth observing, that if we suppose *Adam* uninformed by *God* in the reason of that inseparable union of one man with one woman in marriage, which he had then ordained, this appointment was, with regard to *Adam*, a mere positive institution; and, I believe, no one imagines that it was not so regarded by his sons for six thousand years: and yet in reality it was (and is now demonstrated to be) a law of nature: and shall we yet dare to pronounce that *God* has no right to bind such reasonable clear-sighted creatures as we are, by institutions apparently positive?



DISSERTATION IV.

Of the skill of language infused into Adam.



HAVING demonstrated the necessity of a revelation to be made to *Adam* in relation to marriage, I proceed to shew you, that another revelation was also necessary to him in the state of innocence; And that is, a revelation of language.

THAT God made man a sociable creature, does not need to be proved; and that when he made him such, he with-held nothing from him that was in any wise necessary to his well-being in society, is a clear consequence from the wisdom and goodness of God; and if he with-held nothing any way necessary to his well-being, much less would he withhold from him that which is the instrument of the
 great est

greatest happiness a reasonable creature is capable of in this world. --- If the Lord God made *Adam a help meet for him*, because *it was not good for man to be alone*, can we imagine he would leave him unfurnished of the means to make that help useful and delightful to him? If it was not good for him to be alone, certainly neither was it good for him to have a companion, to whom he could not readily communicate his thoughts, with whom he could neither ease his anxieties, nor divide, or double his joys, --- by a kind, a friendly, a reasonable, a religious conversation; and how he could do this in any degree of perfection, or to any height of rational happiness, is utterly inconceivable without the use of speech.

Now that men have not the use of speech from nature, is an undeniable truth: --- *Herodotus*, indeed, tells us of an *Ægyptian* king, who caused two children to be educated, under a strict injunction to their keeper, that they should never hear a human voice; in order to learn from thence, which was the oldest language; and that after two years, they both pronounced the word *beccos* at the same time; which happened to signify bread in the *Phrygian* language. This conduct of the *Ægyptian* king was evidently absurd; for if he made any rational enquiry by this experiment, it should be this, --- whether there

36 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

was any such thing as a language of nature? For there could be no reason why an untaught child should speak the oldest, more than the latest language, if that oldest, were not the language of nature; and if it was, not only that, but every other child, would speak it untaught; nay, all mankind would of necessity speak that language, and no other; at least, they would of necessity speak that, tho' they had learned others; and every man upon the face of the Earth, would be intelligible to every other, when he spoke it. — Because if sounds had any natural force to express things, 'tis impossible the meaning of them could ever be doubtful, even at the first hearing; and whereas the contrary to this is undeniably the truth; and there is no relation between sounds and things; and words signify things, from no other than the arbitrary agreement of men; 'tis evident, that language is not natural, but instituted; and to suppose *Adam* not endowed with the knowledge and use of it, is to suppose him formed in a much worse condition than the birds of the air, or the beasts of the field; who have all natural means of communicating their wants and desires, and what other ideas are necessary to be communicated for their mutual aid and well-being, by uniform regular sounds, immediately and equally intelligible to the whole species.

AND

AND that the inferior animals have not the advantage of these sounds from instruction, or the example of their parents, is evident; because they are uniformly endowed with them, in all regions, and at all distances from any of their own species; and therefore, 'tis evident, they have their several languages, such as they are, by instinct; that is, either immediately from the divine influence, or from some establishment of infinite wisdom in their formation: or, in other words, that they are taught of God. — And certainly none will be so absurd as to imagine, that God was less careful in the formation of man, or furnished them less perfectly, for all the ends of society, than he furnished the fowls of the air, or the beasts of the field; God forbid!

IF it be said, That the human organs being admirably fitted for the formation of articulate sounds: these, with the help of reason, might in time lead men to the use of language; I own it imaginable that they might: But still, till that end were attained in perfection, which possibly might not be in a series of many generations, it must be owned that brutes were better dealt by, and could better attain all the ends of their creation. — And if that be absurd to be supposed, certainly the other is not less absurd

38 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

to be believed. Nay, I think it justly doubtful, whether, without inspiration from God in this point, man could ever attain the true ends of his being; at least, if we may judge in this case, by the example of those nations, who, being destitute of the advantages of a perfect language, are, in all probability, from the misfortune of that sole defect, sunk into the lowest condition of barbarism and brutality.

AND as to the perfection in which the human organs are framed and fitted for the formation of articulate sounds, this is clearly an argument for believing that God immediately blessed man with the use of speech; and gave him wherewithal to exert those organs to their proper ends: for this is surely as credible, as that when he gave him an appetite for food, and proper organs to eat and to digest it, he did not leave him to seek painfully for a necessary supply, (till his offence had made such a search his curse and punishment) but placed him at once in the midst of abundant plenty.

THE consequence from all which, is, that the perfection and felicity of man, and the wisdom and goodness of God, necessarily required, that *Adam* should be supernaturally endowed with the knowledge and use of language. — And therefore, as certain as it
can

can be, that man was made perfect and happy, and that God is wise and good; so certain is it, that when *Adam* and *Eve* were formed, they were immediately enabled by God to converse and communicate their thoughts, in all the perfection of language necessary to all the ends of their creation.

AND as this was the conduct most becoming the goodness of God; so we are assured from *Moses*, that it was that to which his infinite wisdom determined him: for we find that *Adam* gave names to all the creatures before *Eve* was formed; and consequently, before necessity taught him the use of speech.

AND thus, having proved, in a way perfectly demonstrative to myself, and, I hope, satisfactory to every candid reader, that, at least, five revelations were absolutely necessary to *Adam* in a state of innocence and perfection; I think, I may fairly pronounce, that the main doctrine of our adversaries is absolutely overthrown, even upon their own principles; for supposing man to be now in as much perfection, as he was originally formed in, (which I shall hereafter demonstrate that he is not) yet, if I have shewn that with all the abilities he has now, he could not attain to the true end of his being, unassisted by God; and our adversaries own, that if he could not,

he must be worse dealt by than the beasts that perish; and affirm at the same time, that the wisdom and goodness of God, won't allow this to be believed; it follows, upon their own principles, that if revelation was necessary, God certainly gave it. — Now I have proved revelation to be necessary to man, even on supposition of his being formed in the utmost perfection his nature is capable of; and surely 'tis a clear consequence from this, that it must be more necessary, in proportion as he is found to fall short of that perfection: for otherwise 'twould follow, that tho' the advice and skill of a physician was indeed necessary in perfect health, for the regimen and preservation of it, yet there was no sort of need of it, in sickness.

THAT human nature wanted the assistance of God, in the utmost perfection it can be imagined capable of, I have already proved. — Now waving the question, whether it ever was in more perfection than it is now, which shall be examined on another occasion; that human nature is at this time in all the perfection it is capable of, I believe no man of common sense will pretend to affirm; and if it is not, why it may not yet want more assistance from God, will surely be hard to say; unless God has already given it all the assistance he could give; and if he hath done so, 'tis a demonstration that he hath more
than

than once instructed, exhorted, admonished, reprov'd, and punish'd mankind; because 'tis certain that he could do all this, and that they have more than once needed the interposition of God to all these purposes, unless it be suppos'd, that mankind are utterly incapable of improvement or amendment; of being deterred from evil, or drawn to good: and I should be very sorry to have this suppos'd, even for the sake of our adversaries.

WHEREAS then the main principle upon which the arguments of our adversaries are founded, is utterly overthrown, by demonstrating the necessity of revelation, in the utmost suppos'd perfection of human nature; our controversy with them might properly enough conclude here, if I did not hope the continuance of it, may, in the end, have better effects than the confusion of obstinacy and perverseness; — may, in some measure, vindicate the ways of God with men; — may, by God's assistance, inform the ignorant, satisfy the doubtful, and confirm the faithful; and, if not convince, yet, at least, subdue the infidel; and reduce him to the modesty of enjoying his ignorance in the humility of silence.

RATIONAL doubts, propos'd with candour, and debated with calmness, have unquestionably the clearest claim to our most serious
 atten-


attention; as well as to our best endeavours of clear and rational solutions; but where is the human, or even the Christian patience that can bear with the insolence of error? — To hear the most rational conduct human nature is capable of, insulted by the most irrational; to see men triumph on the side of vice, against the interests of virtue; on the side of error, against the evidence of truth; with the violence of obstinacy, and blindness and absurdity, against the light and majesty of wisdom: is such an outrage upon common decency, as well as common sense, as no man, who hath the interest of virtue, the honour of God, or the good of mankind at heart: is able, is obliged to bear, without indignation. — I speak this not only as an apology, for troubling the Christian reader with recounting and confuting the errors of our adversaries; — but also as an apology, for whatever vehemence may hereafter fall from me, in prosecution of these bold (not gigantick) invaders of heaven.

AND now, having considered the several revelations given to mankind before the fall, — my method next leads me to consider, the several revelations given after the fall.



DISSERTATION V.

Of the revelations which immediately followed the fall.

 EFORE I proceed upon this point, it will be proper to observe, that the common objection to this whole account of the fall, is its obscurity. Now if that obscurity necessarily arises from the truth of the relation, *i. e.* from relating that transaction as it really was; then this objection will be so far from being a prejudice to revelation, that it must greatly tend to confirm it. Now, what reason can be conceived, why *Moses*, who is on other occasions the plainest, most natural, most intelligible historian in the world, should be so very obscure in this; unless it were, that truth required it? For if we suppose him left to his own discretion, or the liberty of his
own

44 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

own invention upon the point, can we imagine that a man of his genius could not give us a more explicit, intelligible account of this matter? there is no question but he could. If therefore we consider *Moses* on this occasion, neither as a philosopher, nor commentator, but barely as an historian: the true way to judge whether he acted faithfully in that character, is, to enquire, whether, from the nature of the thing, a conversation in that state of things, between three such intelligent beings as are here introduced, must not of necessity be obscure to us, in this state, and at this distance.

HUMAN nature is generally supposed to have been then in perfection; at least, *Adam* must be allowed sufficiently acquainted with his own condition; which no man will pretend to know with equal perspicuity at this distance: and as the knowledge of language was inspired by Almighty God, *Adam* and *Eve* must necessarily be supposed fully informed of all the powers and idioms of a tongue so taught. Let it be considered then, that the conversations here related, are between Almighty God, man supposed in perfection, (at least, more intelligent in the point in question, than any man can now be supposed) and another being under the disguise of a brute, subtle and intelligent beyond man, even in perfection. Now all

conversation, must, in proportion to the superior intelligence of the beings concerned, be obscure to beings of less intelligence; especially, if it turns upon points, in which those beings of inferior intelligence, are not sufficiently informed.

IF three of the best mathematicians of the age were to converse but one minute, upon some important point of that science: or three able philosophers upon some principle of natural knowledge, then newly discovered; the relation of that conversation would of necessity be obscure to all persons unskilled in the subject of it: but supposing these same persons, to attain, after some time, to a competent knowledge of the point treated upon: would the obscurity, in which the historian related it, be any prejudice either to his veracity or abilities, in the opinion of those persons? Quite otherwise; it would be a demonstration of his veracity at least, if not of his skill. In like manner, if the conversations and sentences relating to the fall, can, with much study, and with the advantage of all those improvements in knowledge, to which mankind are arrived, be now made more intelligible to us: the obscurity, in which they have hitherto been involved, will be so far from prejudicing the truth of the *Mosaic* relation, that it will be
a strong,

46 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

a strong, additional argument of the writer's fidelity and veracity.

Now whether they are made more intelligible in the subsequent dissertations, the reader will best judge.

THE first revelations which we meet with after the fall, are in the third chapter of *Genesis*, at the 14th and the following verses; where God, upon examining into the offence of our first parents, pronounces sentence upon the several criminals concerned in it, in the following manner.

14. *AND the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattel, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life;*

15. *AND I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

16. *UNTO the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

17. *AND*

17. *AND unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.*

18. *THORNS also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.*

19. *IN the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

HERE is a terrible denunciation of toil, and misery, and death, upon two creatures, who being inured to nothing, and formed for nothing but happiness, must feel infinitely more horror from such a sentence, than we, who are now well acquainted with these great enemies of our nature, (familiar with death, intimate with misery, and *born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward*, can have any notion of. The whole creation curst around them, and on their account; and they, for that very reason, more accurst in the midst of it! This is such an image of complicated and accumulated

Observations
upon the sen-
tences pro-
nounced on
Adam and Eve.

lated distress, as were utterly insupportable even to innocence; and much more to guilt. And therefore, if ever man needed a revelation of mercy, 'twas certainly at this black and dismal moment: which, if not relieved with some beam of hope, must of necessity have carried them both quick to perdition.

THE majesty of God, arrayed in all the terrors of justice, of justice unallayed by mercy, is evidently no object of religious adoration to sinners: love, and hope, and confidence, are essential ingredients of that glorious office; and without these, experience assures us, that religion quickly concludes in distraction and despair. And if religion once failed amidst the miseries of mortality, now denounced upon our first parents, 'tis certain their next rational wish must be, that life should do so too.

'Tis evident therefore, that both religion and nature must sink in this exigence, unsupported by some stay of rational hope. They had lost every thing by their sin; their perfection, their innocence, the favour of God, and their original felicity, and therefore 'tis evident, that no hope could be a sufficient stay, could afford them any degree of rational support, in this exigence: but a strong and well-grounded assurance of recovering

covering what they had lost: and 'tis as evident, that no ray of rational hope, and much less of any solid assurance, shines through all this revelation, unless the sentence of the serpent: and, if that means no more than the letter of it seems to import, there is certainly no rational confidence or consolation to be drawn from that. For what consolation could it be to *Adam* to know (tho' the sentence is also true in this sense) that his posterity would hate serpents, and serpents them? That they should sometimes have their heels hurt by that hateful animal; and, in return, should sometimes trample those vile creatures to death? *Adam* must be fallen indeed, fallen below the last degree of common sense, to derive any degree of satisfaction or support from this sense of the words. And therefore

'tis evident, he must endeavour to derive his hopes from some other interpretation of them; and he was sufficiently justified in doing so. For he was told

The sentence passed upon the serpent, a rational foundation of hope to *Adam*.

that *his seed shall bruise that very serpent's head*. If that meant no more than vengeance upon the serpent; what hindered him from taking it? If vengeance has any good in it, certainly the more speedy, and the more effectual, the better. And what reason was there to believe, that any of his sons would be in a better condition to effect

this, than himself? Or where should they be sure to find this individual creature, when they would effect it? 'Tis evident therefore, that he could see no reason in the world, why this punishment should be referred to any of his posterity, but this only; that some of his posterity would be enabled to execute that sentence, in some other sense than he himself could. And surely, if the words of the sentence did not, upon a due enquiry, give a sufficient foundation for such an hope, neither would God have deliver'd his sentence in such a manner; nor so wise a man as *Moses*, been so careful to convey an unmeaning, unintelligible sentence to posterity. For that *Moses* was a great and a wise man, eminent for depth of sense, as well as dignity and perspicuity of style, no eminent or enlarged genius ever yet denied, or doubted. And therefore, even in honour to so great an authority, we should endeavour to find out some better meaning under the veil of those words.

AND in order to conduct us in this search, we must remember that the earliest method of instructing mankind, in all sublime and important truths, was, by allusions to, and metaphors drawn from sensible things: and as this is the earliest, so is it also the easiest, method of instruction, because it speaks to the understanding, by the senses; which is
at

at all times the surest method of conveying knowledge to the mind; and was, till later refinements introduced abstractions, and universal ideas, the only possible method of instructing to any purpose. Nay, some degree of this, is absolutely necessary at this day: nor can the most refined abstractions of quantity and power, be conveyed to us, without the assistance of sensible symbols; such as, figures, lines, and letters. And certainly such symbols, as have an evident analogy to the things signified, are more intelligible and instructive, than any arbitrary or artificial signs, or characters, can be. Now, this being premised, I will venture to affirm, that, if *Adam* and *Eve* are allowed to have any degree of good understanding, (and there is good reason to believe they had, at least, as good as any of their posterity) they could not but clearly see a far higher and nobler meaning, in the sentence denounced against the serpent, than the words seem at first sight to import. And to lead them more clearly to this way of thinking, 'tis sufficiently apparent, that they saw some vengeance immediately executed by Almighty God upon that creature; and that this vengeance was to them a significant emblem of that final overthrow, which he was one day to suffer from the seed of the woman. *St. Paul*, in the eighth chapter of his epistle to the *Romans*, gives us plainly to understand, that all the

52 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

creatures were curst in the fall: nay, 'tis evident, that the creatures must be affected by the curse denounced upon the earth; and that the curse of the other creatures is plainly implied in that of the serpent. For when God says to him, *Thou art curst above all cattle, and above every beast of the field*, what can be clearer, than that the meaning of these words is this: that tho' the other creatures of the earth were curst in some measure, yet the serpent was more signally curst than any of them. Now, being curst, plainly implies being some way or other reduced to a worse condition; and therefore his (the serpent) being curst in a more remarkable manner, must certainly signify, his being reduced to a remarkably worse condition than he was in before. And what that reduction might be, seems sufficiently hinted in the following words; *Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*. Now these words are plainly a denunciation of punishment; and sufficiently imply the very execution of that curse upon him. But surely, if the serpent was originally formed to go upon his belly, and to eat dust, his continuing in that condition in which God had created him, could be no punishment. And therefore, either these words have no meaning at all, (which it would be both absurd and blasphemous to suppose) or else they must mean his being reduced,

reduced, from that moment, to some lower and more abject condition, than that in which he was created.

AND 'tis evident, that in fact he is in a much lower, a more abject, a more hateful, a more curst condition, than any other beast of the field; less fitted for happiness in that element to which he is doomed; destitute of every limb, every beauty of proportion, and every perfection of every kind, that can render the other creatures of the earth either amiable or excellent! hateful and noxious to the whole brute world, and yet more remarkably so to man their master!

AND what lower, more abject, or more detestable life can be imagined than this? Reduced to the vilest condition of the vilest worm of the earth; reduced, as near as can be imagined, to the very figure and imperfection of an embryo.

PLINY indeed mentions a report, which he had heard, of a kind of serpents with feet; but *Aristotle* discredits this opinion: (though a late * writer affirms himself, to have seen such animals in *Grand-Cairo*) *Herodotus* tells us of some winged serpents that fly annually

* Vide *Blunt's Voyage to the Levant*, &c. also *Maunderel's Journey from Aleppo to the Euphrates*, p. 3.

54 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

from *Arabia* to *Egypt*; and later observations have discovered some winged and bright shining serpents in the eastern and southern parts of the world: and there is also mention made of some of the same species in *Isaiab*, and in the book of *Numbers*. But yet every one of these eat dust, and crawl upon the earth; and probably these are permitted by Almighty God to retain, even yet, some small remains of their original lustre and perfection, to give us some idea of that glory in which they were created, and from which the curse of God hath thrown them down.

BUT here it may be asked, How this supposed diminution of the serpent's glory could be of any use to *Adam*? I answer, Many ways. For, 1st, the serpent boasted to *Eve*, that he had acquired new excellence and perfection by eating the forbidden fruit; nor was it obscurely insinuated, that this was the pure vertue of that fruit; independent of the power of God; and that it would have a proportionable effect on them also: *God knoweth*, says he, *that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods*. Now nothing could so effectually confute this vain boast, and wicked insinuation, as letting *Adam* and *Eve* see, that imperfection, and loss of excellence was the only certain consequence

of his delusion, and opposition to the will of God,

MORE than this, 'tis not improbable that, without the example of divine vengeance on the serpent, *Adam* and *Eve* would be apt to flatter themselves (as many of their posterity prophanelly do at this day, that God Almighty would not be so severe upon them, for eating an apple; little considering, that the easiness of the restraint greatly added to the guilt of disobedience. And therefore nothing could more effectually convince them of the heinousness of their guilt, and the certainty of divine vengeance due to it, than the immediate punishment of that creature, which was no more than the mere instrument of evil. It was easy for them to infer, *if the mere instrument of evil is thus punished, what will become of the real authors and actors?*

AND besides all this, doubtless it was some consolation, as well as matter of much instruction, to *Adam*, to see that glorious instrument of evil, stripped of all his pride and pre-eminence of form, and perfection of parts; and laid prostrate and groveling at his feet. Anticipating, in this shameful fall, and dismal degradation, that dreadful defeat, and utter diminution of glory, which awaited the adversary of mankind, (and perhaps

56 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

under this very form) when the *seed of the woman* should *bruise his head*.

BUT here it may be objected, that all this is only an account of vengeance upon the serpent; whereas the scriptures of the new testament explain all this of *Satan*, under the image of a serpent.

I ANSWER, that *Adam* and *Eve* could not but know, before this time, that the serpent was only an instrument of mischief, made use of by some malignant spirit, in enmity to God and them. I say, *Adam* and *Eve* could not but know this. For they had learned, by their own sad experience, that the forbidden fruit had not the virtue of ennobling nature, and inspiring new abilities, but quite the contrary: and they knew the serpent had neither speech nor reason from nature; and therefore the delusion put upon them, must be the contrivance of some being, not only superior to the serpent, but also far superior to themselves. The work of some spirit, which had taken possession of the serpent's body, and wrought this delusion, by his organs.

Now a spirit assuming and actuating the body of a serpent, may, I think, with great propriety be called a *serpent*; as the Son of God, assuming a human body, is called a
man;

man; and therefore the style of the scriptures is sufficiently justified, in the appellation of *satan*, by the name of the serpent. — Nor is there any more difficulty in conceiving how *satan* could actuate the organs of the serpent on this occasion, than how a reasonable soul can actuate the organs of this animal body we bear about us.

BUT some will ask, How *Adam* and *Eve* could have any idea of spirits? I answer, Many ways, conceiveable even to us; and many ways utterly inconceivable at this distance, and in this state of things. We are told, in the 28th chapter of *Job*, that when *the foundations of the earth were laid, the sons of God shouted for joy*. And probably their jubilee was not less at the completion of that great work. And who can say that *Adam* and *Eve* might not have been witnesses to the hallelujahs of that heavenly chorus on this occasion? or, who will say, that, in the perfection and innocence of their nature, they were not subjects worthy the curiosity, and companions not unworthy the conversation of the highest order of heavenly beings? And what might they not learn from such a communication?

BUT should nothing of this kind inform them, can it be imagined that *Adam* had not knowledge to all the purposes that we have?

Or,

Or, at least, to all the purposes of his duty and well being? *Adam* could not sure be ignorant, that he had a thinking principle within himself, of a very superior nature to the whole order of beings about him: and it was very easy for him to imagine, that other thinking beings might exceed him, as far as he exceeded the best, or even the meanest, of the brutes. Nay, more, if we allow him as much capacity as any man of common contemplation among his sons, (and one would imagine this were no mighty concession,) 'tis evident, he must soon learn that the bodies of the creatures, could, of themselves, have neither sense nor motion: he knew they were made of dust; and surely it required no great sagacity to know, that neither dust, nor any thing made of dust, could think or move: And therefore, whatever thought or motion was observable in the creatures, must be owing to the action and perception of some spirit within them: And, this point being gained, it was certainly easy for him to proceed one step farther; and to reason thus with himself; that the sentence of toil and bodily labour, which it pleased God to pronounce against him, on this occasion, could never be intended to terminate only in his body; which was, in truth, no more than the poor, passive, unoffending instrument of the spirit that ruled it: And, 'tis evident, that when he once

knew,

knew, that the serpent had not beguiled *Eve* by virtue of new faculties, derived from eating the forbidden fruit, nor by the power of his own spirit, which discovered no such ability either before or after: he was under a necessity of concluding, that this creature must have beguiled her, by the power of some other spirit dwelling in him at that time: and when he once concluded this, he could not but conclude, that the sentence passed upon that animal, must of necessity be referred to that spirit which ruled his carcass on this occasion; that carcass, which was no more than the passive instrument of a superior intelligence. This, I say, must be as clearly intelligible to *Adam*, as that the sentence of pain and punishment passed upon himself, tho' literally decreed against his body, must of necessity refer, and be intended as a punishment, to the principle of perception in him, which ruled and swayed his body, to the committal of that crime, which deserved such vengeance from his Maker.

AND, if *Adam* could have any doubt of the truth of this reasoning, the sentence of God, pronounced against the serpent, must clearly and fully confirm him in it. For that sentence is plainly directed and denounced against an intelligent being, and a free agent; who had committed a crime, which a brute was not capable of committing;

60 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

ting; and deserved a punishment, which a mere passive instrument could not deserve. And this consideration could not but ascertain to *Adam*, the true object of the divine wrath and vengeance, on this occasion; which could be no other, than the evil spirit who had committed the offence.

AND, when he was once fully possessed of this point, all the rest was easy. His next enquiry naturally would be, what his Maker could mean, by bruising the head of that instrument of mischief? That he could not understand this according to the letter, I have already shewn; and therefore he was under a necessity of interpreting it in a figurative sense. And certainly it was not hard for him to conceive, that the head was a natural and obvious emblem of power and pre-eminence. And so natural an emblem it is, that it hath been used as another name for power, in all ages, and in most languages of the world, and especially the *Hebrew*. And surely it would be hard to suppose *Adam* ignorant of the idiom of his own tongue; as there is all the reason in the world to believe, that the *Hebrew* was his own.

BESIDES this, he could not but know, that his own head ruled the rest of his body; and that it was the seat of that
 dominion,

dominion, wherewith he presided over the rest of the creatures: and therefore he could not but quickly and clearly conclude, that the bruising the head of the serpent, must signify, the crushing and destroying the dominion and power of that spirit, which had now sway'd the organs of this creature, to his destruction.

AND probably it was in allusion to this history, and this interpretation, that serpents have been considered as emblems of power, from the earliest antiquity. And we know, that when *Epaminondas* * would teach his soldiers that they should destroy the whole power of the enemy, if they could once break the *Spartans*, who were at their head; he did this by bruising the head of a great serpent before them, and then shewing them, that the rest of the body was of no force. And it were hard if *Adam* could not conceive the head of a serpent, to be a proper emblem of hostile power, as well as *Epaminondas*. And this once understood, his hopes must quickly rise in consequence of that light.

HE found that *the seed of the woman* (which doubtless he understood, to be her

* Vid. Polyæn. Stratag. l. 2.

62 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

issue by him) was to be at enmity with this evil spirit; and should, in the end, destroy his power. Enmity implies an opposition of inclination and interest; and therefore enmity to evil, must infer an inclination to good. And such a disposition in his seed, gave hopes of a recovery of that rectitude of will, which he himself had lost by his disobedience.

BUT whatever *Adam* might do, we plainly see that these consequences are fairly deduceable from that sentence. — Nor is it to be imagined, that *Adam* could not at least conceive so much hope from it, as was sufficient to keep up a sense of religion in his mind; which was all that was absolutely necessary. — It was also obvious for him to conclude, that the destroying the power of his adversary, must imply conquest; that the conquest of a spirit so superior to himself, must necessarily imply abilities very much superior to his own; and if his seed were once possessed of rectitude of will, added to better abilities, they must, at least, be restored to the primitive perfection of human nature; and seemingly to more. And in that perfection, they must certainly be acceptable to their Maker.

'Tis true, he and *Eve* must *return to their dust*; and possibly might not live to see this triumph

triumph and restitution of their species, in their seed; the humility, to which the sense of their guilt had reduced them, would easily suggest, that probably they, who were such criminals, were unworthy the honour and happiness of being admitted to see that blessed state of things; but, however, it could not fail to be matter of infinite satisfaction to them, to think, that their posterity should attain it.

AND thus, having incontestably proved the necessity of some revelation of mercy to be given to *Adam*, at the time of that unspeakable calamity with which he was overwhelmed, upon the denunciation of God's wrath against him; and having, by a natural, and obvious train of thinking, shewn you, that *Adam*, with a common degree of reason and reflection, must, after mature reflection and deliberation, of necessity conclude, that *Eve's* deception was wrought by a malignant spirit, acting by the organs of the serpent; and consequently, that the sentence, denounced against that creature, must of necessity be referred to that evil spirit, who was the author of the guilt; having also shewn you, how *Adam*, by a very natural and obvious interpretation of one figurative expression, agreeable to the idiom of his own language, might derive clear and rational hopes of the destruction
of

of his real enemy, from the sentence pronounced against the serpent; as also of the restitution of his posterity to their original purity and perfection, by that destruction: I should next proceed, to clear some other difficulties in relation to this sentence.

A digression
in answer to
one part of the
letter to Dr.
Waterland.

BUT before I enter upon this subject, I must beg leave to obviate a common objection which lies against this way of interpretation, which I have now taken; *viz.* that it is not fair to interpret one sentence of the same discourse literally, and another figuratively: and a late ingenious writer * insults the weakness and ignorance of believers upon this head, with such a vivacity and fulness of spirits, as is not always decent, even in the triumphs of truth. Speaking of the *Mosaic* history of the creation, fall, &c.—he has these words:

“ MUST we believe it all an *allegory*?
 “ No. Must we believe it to be all *literal*?
 “ No. What then are we to do? Why we
 “ are to consider it neither as *fact* nor *fable*;
 “ neither *literal* nor *allegorical*; but *both* together: to interpret one sentence *literally*;
 “ the next *allegorically*, &c. —

* Letter to Dr. *Waterland*, p. 14.

FOR instance ; *God made man*, we accept *literally*; but *after his own image*, in a *figurative* or *metaphorical* sense, &c.

Now 'tis evident from this instance, that this ingenious writer makes no distinction between metaphor and allegory; if he had, he could not but see, that he is the allegorical interpreter, who takes the whole account of the fall, as related by *Moses*, to be a kind of *Egyptian*, or eastern fable; under which some hidden truth is intended to be conveyed; and that Dr. *Waterland*, and such as think with him, understand the *Mosaic* account of this matter, as no way fabulous or hieroglyphical; but an historical relation of fact; (a real serpent, a real apple, &c.) though with some obscurity, and some metaphorical expressions.

I CAN'T explain myself on this head better, than by the instance objected by this gentleman, (the author of the letter.)

GOD made man, we accept *literally*; but *after his own image*, in a *figurative*; or *metaphorical* sense: And with great submission to this ingenious writer; What is there, unfair, or irrational in this conduct? Is not this the proper, and the rational way of interpreting every writing under heaven, as well as the

scriptures? Is there one good writing in the world, which must not thus be interpreted in every page? and would not otherwise be absurd and unintelligible?

IT were easy to illustrate this in infinite instances; but I shall beg leave only to mention one; and from an author whom, I am sure, this gentleman will not deny to be a good writer.

IN the letter to Dr. *Waterland*, p. 15. are these words, — “ Now is it not more rational to follow one uniform consistent way of interpretation, than to jump at every step, so arbitrarily from *letter* to *allegory*? And if the *letter* be found in fact contradictory to reason, and the notions we have of God, What is there left, but to recur to *allegory*?

Now taking the words *allegory* and *metaphor* to signify the same thing, (as this gentleman has thought fit to do on this occasion) I would gladly know how the reader is to understand this period. Must he believe it all an *allegory*? No. Must he believe it should all be interpreted according to the letter? No. What then are we to do? Why, we are to consider it as neither *literal* nor *allegorical*, but both together.

FOR instance, — The first part of the period, [*now is it not more rational to follow one uniform consistent way of interpretation*] is neither *literal*, nor *allegorical*, but both together: the words, *more rational*, I understand *literally*: to follow one uniform consistent way, I take to be *metaphorical*: the words, *of interpretation*, I understand *literally*: the subsequent words, *to jump at every step*, I take to be *metaphorical*: And for this plain reason —

I CANNOT believe that a writer of such excellent understanding, can mean *literal*, *real* jumps and steps in this place; because such an interpretation would be found in fact contradictory to reason, and the notions we have of good writing: What then *is there left* (to use his own words) *but to recur to allegory?*

Now what I cannot believe of this author, I cannot believe of *Moses*: and therefore, when *Moses* says, that man was made in the *image* of God; I can no more understand the word *image* here, of a *real*, *literal*, *sensible* image, than I can this author's *jumps* and *steps* in this place, to signify *real*, *literal* jumps and steps; because I think one interpretation would be as contradictory to reason, and as unworthy of *Moses*, and of God,

as the other would be unworthy of this ingenious author.

I APPEAL to every reader of candor and common sense; Would it not be excessively absurd, or excessively disingenuous in me, not to interpret this ingenious author's writings in a fair, rational way; as partly *literal*; and partly *figurative*? And can I escape the justest imputations of absurdity and disingenuity, if I fail to treat the writings of *Moses* with the same candor, and to judge of them by the same rules of rational interpretation? And must it follow from hence, that we must consider this history as neither *fact* nor *fable*? No, surely,—since figurative interpretations, of particular sentences, in historical relations, are perfectly consistent with the strictest truth of fact. All then that can be required of us, is, to shew that this history, considered, as strictly true in fact, (tho', in some respects, obscure) has nothing in it, that we can find, any way unworthy either of the wisdom or goodness of God.—How far the precedent dissertations have effected this; as also, how far the subsequent, may be of any use to the same purpose, the reader will best judge.



DISSERTATION VI.

*Concerning some difficulties and objections
that lie against the Mosaic account
of the fall.*



COME now to consider some difficulties which yet lie against my explication of this sentence, as pronounced upon *fatan* under the image of the serpent.

AND the first difficulty is this;

WHY God punished the evil spirit, under the figure of the serpent?

THAT it was necessary, in the wisdom of God, to punish the author of evil at this time, and in the presence of *Adam* and *Eve*, is evident; Otherwise they might have been led into a most dangerous and destructive

error: they might have imagined that there was some principle of evil in the world, some powerful malignant spirit independent of God, and capable of controlling his will: * and therefore there was a necessity that God should exert such a power over this evil spirit, in the presence of *Adam* and *Eve*, as might convince them, that he was subject to the almighty power of their Maker; and severely accountable to him, for all the mischief he wrought in the world; as might convince them, in the style of the prophet, that *he was God, and that there was none else; — that he was God, and there was none like him, — saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* — And what could be a clearer proof of this, than subduing that evil spirit, in that very brutal disguise, which he had put on, the better to accomplish his malice against God, and his creatures; than to let them see, that he was not so much as able to defend the poor creature, whose carcass he had usurped, from immediate infamy; nor dared so much as to open his mouth, either in vindication of his own conduct, or mitigation of his sentence?

Now (to say nothing of the sentence passed upon the principal himself on this

*. See Dr. *Sherlock's* discourses of prophecy.

occasion) 'tis evident, that an uncontrolled punishment of the accomplices in guilt, in the presence of the principal, plainly proves a power over the principal; and the nature of the proceeding, must suppose the chief criminal present, when sentence was passed.

THE same thing is also evident, from the tenor of the sentence, expressly directed to him, *i. e.* directed against the serpent, as an intelligent criminal. Nor will the malignity of his nature suffer us so much as to suspect that he would attempt to retire, before he was surprized in his guilt by God: for that would infallibly suggest to him, to stay, and enjoy the fruits of his triumph, to the full. Or, if we suspect that his malignity would not detain him, his curiosity certainly would. Nay, there was a necessity, in point of real information, that he should stay: for, in truth, it was impossible otherwise for him to know, what evil effects the forbidden fruit would have upon that unhappy pair: for this, nothing but God, who made that and them, could know, without experiment and observation. Nay, there is reason to believe that he expected they would die that very day; from those words of God to them, *In the day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die*: and this seems to have been his chief aim, in deluding them to eat that fruit: the utter destruction of that species, for whom God had created a

world, was a scheme of evil worthy his highest malignity; and therefore there is not the least doubt of his waiting there, with the utmost impatience to see the success of his device. Or, if we could suppose him fled, how easy was it for an all-powerful, omnipresent Being, to bring him back to the place of his punishment? And when he was there, the wisdom of God would naturally engage him to arrest him there, in such a manner, as to leave *Adam* and *Eve* fully satisfied, that he heard and felt the vengeance denounced against him; which it was easy for God to do, and which doubtless he did.

AND as to his being punished, under the figure of the serpent, we know, that a spirit cannot be punished, to human eyes, otherwise than under some sensible appearance; and what other sensible appearance could have any relation to him, or his crime? and besides, what could be a more proper humiliation of his pride, than to punish him under that (now debased) brutal form, in which he perpetrated the guilt? Suppose a prince surprized a malignant subject, of the first quality, plotting rebellion against him, in some obscure and infamous disguise; may we not imagine, that it would greatly add to his mortification, to be executed, in all the infamy of that character he had taken upon

upon him? and yet the mortification must be infinitely stronger in the present case. To have the proudest spirit of heaven degraded down to the infamy of a brute? Nay, to have that very brute, degraded far below his own natural character, sunk into the very lowest and vilest condition of brutality, in order to sink his inmate yet lower! To have the proudest spirit of heaven, known by no other name among men and angels, to all eternity, than that of a vile serpent; nor distinguished for any other talents, than such as characterize that basest of brutes, to the whole world; deceit, treachery, malignity, and enmity to every thing good and excellent! *O Lucifer, son of the morning, how art thou fallen from heaven! How art thou cut down to the ground! Thou that saidst in thy heart, I will ascend unto heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, — I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, — I will be like to the Most High, — yet art thou brought down to hell.*

THE next question that comes to be examined is this :

WHY the serpent was punished, being incapable of guilt?

IN

IN answer to this, I must own 'tis to me a most shocking and presumptuous enquiry, to ask why God disposes or determines of his creatures, in this or that manner! Is it not enough for us to know, that the purity and perfection of his nature, will not suffer him to act, otherwise, than by the direction of infinite wisdom, under the influence of infinite goodness? Cannot he, who gave being, and beauty, and excellence to his creatures, resume them all, when, and as often as he thinks fit? and shall we say unto God, *What dost Thou?* But forasmuch as questions of this kind, are often asked from a seeming concern for the honour of God, and therefore have some claim to our regard on that score; let it be sufficient to tell all such enquirers, that God created the brute world, for his own glory, and the good of man; *i. e.* for the manifestation of his infinite wisdom and goodness, in providing so amply and so admirably, for the human happiness; and that his wisdom, as well as goodness, to the brute world, is yet farther manifested, in submitting them to the dominion of man; as might easily be made appear; and as for their outward splendor, inasmuch as it appears to be of no consequence to themselves, 'tis not easy to conceive, why Infinite Wisdom poured it upon them, in such variety and profusion, unless, to entertain the curiosity and the wonder of that active and inquisitive spirit,

rit, wherewith he hath endowed this lord of the nether world. That his curiosity, should even in its weakness, lead him in every research, to adore his Almighty Maker, with higher degrees of admiration and reverence. And therefore, should these outward perfections, by any unhappy accident, become so far liable to be abused, as to defeat the very ends for which they were bestowed: must not the same goodness take them away, for the very same reasons for which he bestowed them? And this, according to the tenor of *Moses's* account, is the very case of the serpent in the point before us. When satan had seduced man to sin against his Maker, by the abuse of those very perfections, in one of his creatures, which should naturally have inflamed his adoration, into higher acts of praise and thanksgiving; the power and wisdom of God were many ways concerned to impair that excellence, which was so abused.

1. THE power and majesty of God were concerned, (as I before shewed) in letting *Adam* and *Eve* see, that the wicked spirit, who had employed the serpent's organs to their hurt, was not able to defend his own instrument, from immediate disgrace: His wisdom also demanded some signal mark of vengeance against the instrument of evil; in manifestation of his invincible abhorrence of guilt. (So, the beast that has been abused to
unclean-

76 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

uncleanness, under the law, was to perish; and the very gold which compos'd that calf that seduced *Israel* to sin, was to be dispers'd and mixed with common dust.) And who will say, that the vindication of God's authority, and the steady, unalterable manifestation of his irreconcilable enmity to evil, are not of infinitely more value, than the beauty, or even the being, of the highest and noblest of his creatures? Nor can it be pretended, that there is the least shadow of injustice in the case; it being a known maxim, that there can be no injury, where there is no right: And what other right has any creature to being or excellence of any kind, but the will of his Maker? Besides it cannot be suppos'd there was any hardship to the creature, in the curse now denounced; for what we call a worse condition in the creatures, must arise, from a contraction of life, a diminution of happiness, a diminution of outward splendor and perfection, or some accession of real misery. As to the two first, 'tis evident, that if brutes are suppos'd to be created in that state, and with that degree of happiness, in which we now see them, we can make no reasonable objection to the divine goodness on that account; and certainly 'tis no more an imputation upon the Divine Goodness, to reduce them to this state, than it would have been to have created them in it: For as brutes have no anticipation of death, nor a capacity of reflecting

and

and comparing, 'tis evident that a diminution of happiness, which implies no degree of misery, can be no evil. A less good, is indeed comparatively evil; but then this idea of evil arises entirely from comparison: And therefore where there is no comparison, there certainly can be no *ratio* of evil; and where there is no evil, there can be no injury.

As to the third point, 'tis evident, that all outward perfections of the creatures, with all such qualities as may make them more amiable and useful to man, were bestowed solely for the sake of man: Nor can brutes be reasonably supposed to have an idea of them; nor would the ends of their being (with regard to themselves) be any way defeated by a diminution of them. God made this earth and all the creatures amiable and excellent, to make the world a scene of greater happiness to a creature that was to continue in it: but when sin introduced death, he cursed the earth and the creatures by a diminution of excellence; to make the world less desirable to a creature who was so soon to leave it. Now a diminution of outward excellence, or other qualities that might make the creatures more useful and amiable to man, by no means infers a diminution of real happiness; and much less an accession of real misery; which the goodness of God will not suffer us to suspect him capable of inflicting upon an innocent creature.

creature. The sentence denounced against him (the serpent) does indeed affect his form and food; but not his subtilty, nor perhaps his strength: or, say it affected his strength as well as form, 'tis evident, that the wisdom of God is in this case beyond all comparison better manifested, in the ample support of apparent incapacity and imperfection. For example, if God hath deprived the serpent of feet to carry him to a due search of the necessities of life, surely he hath abundantly compensated that defect, by feeding him to the full at his ease; as it is notorious, that even the birds of the air fly into his very mouth to feed him. And 'tis perhaps for no other reason, that God Almighty hath permitted many of these creatures to grow to an enormous bulk, through the course of many succeeding centuries, but that men might bear witness to the extraordinary, and, to us, miraculous support of this seemingly imperfect animal, from generation to generation. As we are told, there was a serpent in *Africa*, in the time of the first *Carthaginian* war, of such an enormous strength and size, as gave *Regulus* and his army work enough to subdue him, with their engines of war; (as we are also told of many others) and if after this, you suppose the serpent's strength diminished, at least it must be allowed, that this diminution was not more than was absolutely necessary.

MOSES

MOSES tells us in the 3d chapter of *Genesis*, That *the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made*. And naturalists assure us, that his subtilty enables him to contend with the strength of the elephant, and to conquer it; others tell us, that the serpent has a fascination in his eyes; and bewitches the creatures to their destruction. And what does all this mean, but that he has a subtilty in tempting and seducing, which exceeds not only the capacity, but the comprehension of the most accurate observers of mankind?

IF God then hath impaired the serpent to all appearance, and yet left him wherewithal to supply all the demands of nature, in a most extraordinary and most amazing manner, is it possible to imagine a greater demonstration either of the wisdom of God, or the truth of the *Mosaic* history, than this? The serpent is impaired, and yet he is a match for armies; he is reduced to all the imperfection of a worm, and yet is he able to support himself in a state of enmity with the whole world.

BUT farther yet; another reason why the serpent was impaired in his outward perfections, was, that this instrument of satan might carry less temptation; when God, in his infinite wisdom, foresaw, that satan, would
more

80 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

more than once, abuse this very creature to the same wicked purposes. As it is notorious, that there is scarce a nation under heaven, which he hath not seduced, at sundry times, to the grossest and vilest idolatry (even the idolatry, of his own hellish worship) in the figure, and under the semblance of serpents of all kinds.

COULD any thing then be more wise, or more beneficent in Almighty God, than to deface that excellence in the serpent's form, which he knew would be a temptation to idolatrous worship; and at the same to inspire mankind with a strong enmity to him, not only to with-hold, but to deter them from delusion; when he yet knew, that in spite of all these disadvantages, and this antipathy, many of them would be seduced by their adversary, to pay him divine adoration, under that very appearance? Now this fact being admitted, what conduct could better become the wisdom and the goodness of God, than cursing this creature in so eminent a manner, above all other beasts of the field, as *Moses* assures us he did?

AND here I cannot help putting this plain question to our adversaries; Do they know, that mankind have been so often deluded, in so many ages and regions of the world, to pay divine adoration to serpents? If they do not
know

know this, they are so far from being in a condition to insult the ignorance of believers, that their own ignorance is indeed lamentable: and if they do know it, will they yet dare to deride us, for believing that *Eve* mistook one of that species for a reasonable creature, when so many millions of her sons and daughters have, not only mistaken, but adored an infinity of them as divine? In a word, if they do not know this, they are the most pitiable, in point of ignorance, of any sect that ever pretended to a superiority of light and learning; and if they do know it, they are at once the most shameless and most abandoned of the sons of *Adam*. Let infidels choose which side of this dilemma they like best.

BUT here it may be objected, *That other creatures were worshipped as well as the serpent.*

I ANSWER, That other creatures were also cursed as well as the serpent; but as God, in his infinite wisdom, foresaw, that men would be more deluded to the worship of the serpent, than to that of any other creature, as in fact they were; therefore did he curse the serpent above any other creature.

AGAIN; if it be asked, *Why the tempter chose the body of the serpent preferably to that of any other creature?*

82 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

I ANSWER, Because he was more subtle, and probably more excellent in his make; and his aspect more resembling the human; as some of that species are said to have at this day. Now these advantages, seemed to imply superior perfection; and superior perfection made the gradation from brute to rational more credible; and consequently, the true tempter was better hid; whereas, had he assumed the disguise of an as or a dove, (which a late very ingenious writer thinks had been fitter engines for satan) the gradation had been much more prodigious; and, of consequence, much more liable to suspicion and distrust.

ADD to this, That no finite being can actuate any creature beyond what the fitness and capacity of his organs will admit: and therefore the natural subtilty of the serpent, and perhaps, the pliability and forkiness of his tongue (which we know enables other creatures to pronounce articulate sounds) added to the advantages of his form, made him the fittest instrument of delusion that can be imagined.

BUT here it may be objected, *If the tempter had so many advantages to strengthen his delusion, why were our first parents punished for yielding to it?*

I AN-

I ANSWER, That this temptation, all things considered, was not stronger to them, than ordinary temptations are, at this day, to their posterity.

WE know that temptations are now prevalent with mankind, from ignorance, from evil example, from natural depravity, or from pressing necessity.

I/ſt, I SAY, men are now tempted to transgress in a thousand instances, from downright ignorance. Nay, they are often tempted to transgress the law of God, from the secret suggestions of their own corrupt hearts; or the open suggestions of their seducers, that it is not the law of God, but the contrivance of priests and princes, to keep the world in awe. But *Adam* and *Eve* had no pretence of ignorance of any kind. They knew the law, the legislator, and the danger of transgressing. God himself forbade them to touch the fruit; and told them the evil which would inevitably attend their disobedience: therefore they are utterly inexcusable upon the head of ignorance.

EVIL example they had none, but that of the serpent: And how could the example of a brute be any rule of action to them? The example of men, is, in many instances, in

84 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

the place of precept to men : their wisdom, and their success, are often esteem'd sufficient securities for a safe imitation ; but the example of a brute, could be neither security, nor precept. What was advantageous to a serpent, might be pernicious to a man : what was permitted to a brute, who was neither capable of law nor sin, might, for the highest reasons, be prohibited to man, who is capable of both.

NATURAL depravity they had none, being made good, and perfect in their kind. And necessity they had none, having an infinite variety of other fruits, every way as good, and as desirable, for supply of their natural wants, as that which was with-held from them ; — for we are assured, that God gave them every tree upon the face of the earth, that was good for food, and pleasant to the sight, except that single tree ; and there is not the least reason to believe, that this had any advantage, in these respects, over any one of all the rest.

AND here I cannot but observe, how faithfully *the sons of perdition* retain, to this day, the same spirit of calumny, which reigned in the old serpent from the beginning : hardily imputing all the restraints of religion, to the craft of God's priests, to keep men in subjection to themselves ; as *satan* imputed the first restraint,

strait to the craft of God, to keep man in inferiority and awe.

BUT still it may be asked, *Why this instance of obedience was exacted of Adam and Eve? and why this temptation was thrown in their way, when God knew they would transgress?*

SHOULD * a father discard and disinherit his child for having deserted some post assigned him, seduced either by the craft of some old sophister, or driven off by superior strength? &c.

CICERO tells us, that the very gods of the poets, had they known how pernicious their gifts would prove to their children, must be thought to have been wanting in kindness towards them, &c.

I ANSWER, That these are indeed plausible enquiries and objections: but if they are thoroughly considered, nothing in nature can be more presumptuous, or unjustifiable. For to ask, why God did not make man independent of his own authority, or superior to temptation in any particular instance, is in reality to ask, why he made him a creature? and if a creature, why a reasonable creature,

* Vide letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 17, &c.

and a free agent? or, having made him such, why he did not make him an absolutely perfect being, — *i. e.* God? For if we have a right to know why God did not make him more perfect in this point of the forbidden fruit, we have the same right to know why he did not make him more perfect in another, and in a third, and so on endlessly; till we know why he did not make him as perfect as himself. And if God had a right to make his creatures amenable to his authority in all instances, why not in any particular instance? Who is best judge in this case, God, or you?

BUT this will be better cleared, by discussing this point in a more particular manner.

IN the first place then, it is evident, that no being, is, or can be, independent, but God. Dependence is included in the very idea of a creature. If God had placed *Adam* in a state of dependence upon any of the highest orders of heavenly beings, 'tis evident, he had been, so far, placed in a state of infelicity; because the highest imaginable degree of created excellence, must of necessity imply some degree of ignorance and imperfection: And man had then been to archangels, for example, what brutes are now to men; who are, in a thousand instances, incapable

capable of supplying their wants, or preventing their misery. And therefore when God created man with a dependence only upon himself, 'tis evident, he, so far, consulted his highest interests and happiness. Since then, man, as a creature, must of necessity be dependent: and, being dependent, it was his interest to be immediately dependent of God: it was certainly his interest also, to have a sure and constant sense of that dependence kept up in his mind: for otherwise, he might lose the advantage of it, upon any exigency. And no created being can be imagined so perfect, as never to need the guidance, or influence, or assistance of infinite power, and infinite wisdom. And if it was *Adam's* advantage to have a constant sense of that dependency kept up in his mind, it was certainly his advantage to have some sure and permanent memorial of it, placed before his eyes, in such manner, as should make it impossible for him to forget it.

BESIDES this, as *Adam's* interest required such a dependency, the honour of God exacted some manifestation of it: for dependency in a creature, without some mark or manifestation of such a state, is utterly unintelligible; or, to speak more properly, is a contradiction: because 'tis, with regard to that creature, to all intents and purposes, a state of independency. And therefore, if

the honour of God, and the character of a Creator, necessarily require some manifestation of dependency in his creatures, 'tis evident, that in a reasonable creature, they require such manifestation of it, as is most agreeable to the nature of a reasonable creature, and a free agent; a creature sensible of dependency, and capable of acknowledging it. And how can this acknowledgement be made, but by homage and obedience of some kind? and all homage and obedience, of necessity imply some restraint of natural liberty. And, since some restraint of natural liberty was necessary, in *Adam's* case; what restraint could be more easy, than a restraint of his appetite from one fruit, amidst an infinite variety of others no less delicious, and possibly many, perhaps all of them, more so? And, at the same time, what restraint could be more worthy the wisdom and the goodness of God, than the prohibition of a fruit, which he knew would be pernicious to his creature?

AND probably it was for this very reason, that the tree of knowledge was placed in a distinguished situation, in the midst of the garden. For I have already shewn, that if a dependence upon God was for *Adam's* interest, a constant sense of that dependency must be so too; and how should that be better kept up, than by some remarkable memorial
before

before his eyes? And what could more naturally contribute to make such a memorial remarkable, than a very singular and distinguished situation? And if some restraint of *Adam's* liberty was necessary, in manifestation and acknowledgement of dependency; and God in his wisdom thought fit to place that restraint upon some indulgence of appetite, which would be pernicious to him; (for that there was no necessity of such moral restraints, in that state of things, as are now found expedient, is sufficiently evident) could any thing better become his wisdom and goodness, than to place the object of that appetite in some place so distinguished, as to prevent all possibility of mistaking that fruit for any other?

AND as to its being a perpetual object of temptation; for my part, I have no idea of any Being placed out of the reach of temptation, but God alone. All created beings have of necessity limited powers; and are of necessity, limited in the use of these powers; and, if every thing not granted, be a restraint, every creature in the universe is restrained; and, as such, every angel, of every order, must be in the midst of temptations, even in the midst of heaven. But at the same time, surely all those creatures must be inexcusable, who, when God hath given them every thing necessary for their happiness, will
yet

yet repine if they have not more; and disobey where they are not indulged. And therefore the conduct of Almighty God, with relation to the restraint laid upon *Adam*, however liable to exception at first sight, yet will, upon a thorough enquiry, be found to flow from the inexhaustible fountain of his infinite wisdom and goodness.

As to the particular objections urged in the letter to Dr. *Waterland*, the learned and ingenious author could, I am sure, had he thought fit to take the other side of the question, have given them clear and solid solutions; he knows very well, that God neither discarded nor disinherited his son, tho' he chastised his disobedience; and that such chastisement may be (and, upon the Christian scheme, was) the effect of infinite wisdom and goodness in the author; that the curse upon *Adam*, and the earth, was the effect of mercy, not *fury*; to make a temporary life, and a vexatious world, less desirable to him; that tho' his happiness was impaired, yet neither his hope nor his inheritance were cut off; and that obedience left him still in a capacity of recovering more, than all that disobedience had forfeited.

BUT yet, if, notwithstanding the manifest equity and benignity of the divine conduct on this occasion, this acute author cannot see
how

how it can be acquitted of *seeming injustice, and unreasonable severity*, I judge him not: *to his own master he standeth or falleth*; — but I earnestly wish him to remember, that the wisest of mortal beings may too easily be blinded by vanity: and drawn into the greatest absurdities, in defence of a favourite hypothesis.

BUT 'tis objected, (by the same writer, p. 18, 19.) that God can make nothing in vain, — yet paradise was so; since it was no sooner made than forfeited, and, like a theatrical scene, changed in an instant to a prospect of misery and barrenness.

Is then every thing made in vain that is transitory? and did paradise vanish in an instant? and do the scriptures warrant us to believe so? quite the contrary. — But suppose it to have lasted but one day; the *Ephemeris's* whole life, and end of existence, is fully compassed in a less space; and yet the infinite wisdom and almighty power of God, are as amply manifested in the formation of that insect, as in the whole apparatus of paradise!

SUPPOSE it lasted but a day, — 'tis evident, that the whole scheme of our redemption is built upon the transactions of that day: and is that vain and unworthy of God? and
are

are you sure it is? and can you prove it to be so? O arrogance of mortal vanity! are the *times* and *seasons* in our hands! and is it ours to say, when — and how long! Must our ideas of duration and estimates of fitness determine Him, *with whom a thousand years are but as one day*, — and one day as a thousand years! Wise son of *Sirach*, how just is thy reflection! *wisdom is far from * pride.*

BUT *Cicero* tells us, “ that the common
 “ *opinion of all philosophers is, that the deity*
 “ *can neither be angry nor hurt any body;*
 “ ---how would he have been surprized then,
 “ to find God represented here, as *fierce* and
 “ *enraged*, driving out his own creatures in
 “ *anger*, — and, in a kind of *fury*, *cursing*
 “ *the very earth* for their sakes! ”

NOW would not any man that read this paragraph, and saw the words *fierce*, *enraged*, *anger*, *fury*, in *Italick* characters, imagine at first sight that *Moses* made use of all these expressions, to set forth the vehemence and excess of the divine wrath on this occasion? and that the divine Being was represented as a fury, with a scourge of scorpions, driving out his wretched creatures from bliss?--- And yet how must he be astonished to find

* *Ecclus.* xv. 8.

no other foundation for all this calumny, than the delusion of a vain, unruly, and blasphemous imagination, except in the single expression of *curſing the earth*? which I have already ſhewn, and ſhall yet farther ſhew, to be the effect of mercy, not fury, to a creature whoſe guilt had entailed death and miſery upon himſelf, and his poſterity; — not one ſyllable or leaſt hint of *anger*, *rage*, *fury*, or driving out, — throughout the whole relation; but quite the contrary.

WHOEVER conſiders *Mofes's* account of this matter, will be more inclined to think, that they continued in paradise for ſome time after their ſentence; — at leaſt, 'tis evident, that God was mindful of their well-being, and provided them proper protection from the weather, before their exile.—Was this the dictate of fury? Nay more, God is repreſented by *Mofes*, as deliberating and aſſigning the moſt gracious reaſon imaginable for his removal of them, — even leſt they ſhould eat of the *tree of life*, and live for ever; which was doubtleſs, in that condition, the greateſt curſe of which they were capable; *therefore the Lord ſent* (not *drove*) *him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the earth from whence he was taken.*

'Tis true, when he hath related the fact in all the ſimplicity of truth, he afterwards,
in

in reflecting upon it, does it in the style usual on all occasions of expressing all exiles or involuntary dimissions, by the terms of *driving* or *casting* out, tho' such actions were the known effects of the mildest justice, and conducted under all the circumstances of tenderness and mercy; — and the most equitable decisions of law, are, at this day, usually expressed in that style.

BUT still this was hurting; — and *Cicero* and all the philosophers hold, that the deity *can hurt nobody*.

I ANSWER, That a governor of the world, that *can hurt nobody*, (tho' such a being cannot strictly be said to *be angry*) that is, that cannot, and will not punish vice and disobedience, is a senseless supposition; tho' all the free-thinkers in the world joined all the heathen philosophers that ever lived, in suggesting and defending it.

I HAVE as high a veneration for *Cicero* and his talents, in their proper sphere, as this objector, or any of his adherents: but I have an infinitely higher for Him *who brought life and immortality to light by the gospel*: and I am confirmed in the justice of this way of thinking, when I find that every Christian of common sense, who hath read his bible with care, hath juster, more adequate, and
more

more honourable notions of God, than the wisest heathen that ever lived.

BUT still we are told, that “ *Cicero ex-*
“ *claims on another occasion, Oh the won-*
“ *derful equity of the gods ! would any people*
“ *endure the maker of such a law, that the*
“ *son or grandson should be punished, because*
“ *the father or grandfather had offended ? —*
“ *how would he have exclaimed then at*
“ *God’s punishing so severely, not only the*
“ *first pair, but their whole posterity, the*
“ *whole race of mankind for their sin ; and*
“ *even the serpent too, for the fraud of the*
“ *devil ?* ”

THAT the serpent could be punished, as he was, consistently with divine justice, I have already shewn : that children may be punished to the latest posterity, or till the whole race is extinguished, for the sins of their parents, is a necessary consequence from the nature and constitution of things ; and therefore can be no imputation upon infinite wisdom and goodness ; since ’tis evidently the effect of both. — And in one word, to suppose it utterly inconsistent with equity, to punish the son for the offences of the father or grandfather, implies a most pitiable ignorance of all the laws of God, of nature, and of society ; how great soever the

the name may be, under which, such *illinesses* are vended and protected.

LASTLY, this gentleman tells us, that *Cicero* laughed at the story of *Alexander's* dreaming that a serpent spoke: "but, says he, how would he have laughed at the literal story of a serpent actually speaking and reasoning, &c."

I ANSWER, That whatever *Cicero* might have thought of *Alexander's* dream, the veneration I bear to his memory, will never allow me to believe, that he could have treated *Moses's* account of the serpent's speaking, as a subject of ridicule. I mean, if he had well weighed, if he had thoroughly and candidly considered it in all its circumstances; tho', I own, it is neither easy nor safe to say, what that mortal's excessive vanity and manifest ignorance of the true nature of God, might inspire him to do, who could think so weakly and unworthily of the Ruler of the world, as to imagine him incapable of punishing iniquity; if, in truth, he did seriously think so.

AND whereas this writer would have us believe, that *Josephus* had but a low opinion of *Moses's* divine inspiration, from some very temperate expressions of that historian's upon this head; — This objection

tion, will, I think, vanish, to any man of sense that considers when that *Jew* wrote, and to whom, — that he might with good reason think it expedient to abate from the rigour of truth, in some instances: the better to soften and accommodate what he had to say, to the prejudices of his readers. For that he thought justly, that is, highly, of the divine mission of *Moses*, a late learned writer hath sufficiently made appear, from several other parts of his writings; (see the reply to the defence of the letter to Dr. Waterland.) — Tho', if this proof could not be produced, and *Josephus* were justly liable to suspicion in that point, 'tis evident, no mighty advantage could be drawn from thence in favour of infidelity; since, 'tis very possible, (as some learned men have observed) he might, at that time, have been oppressed with doubts and difficulties, from the disappointment of his people, in the completion of those prophecies relating to the Messiah, (which were to be fulfilled about that time) in the sense and manner their selfish vanity suggested.

WHOEVER considers this seriously, will surely find little credit or conviction in opposing any quotation from him, to the constant united sense, of so many great and wise men, of so many different nations and interests, thro' so vast a series of centuries.



DISSERTATION VII.

Some farther difficulties relating to the fall considered.



HE way being thus cleared, I now proceed to answer some other difficulties that arise on this head. As, 1st,

The serpent's sentence considered.

IF this sentence upon the serpent, was designed for Adam's consolation, and as a stay of hope, that his seed should destroy the power of satan, and be restored to the favour of God, Why was it so obscurely delivered?

I ANSWER, That it was delivered in such a manner, as sufficiently suggested to *Adam*, a reasonable hope of recovering in his posterity, what he had lost in his own person; and more evidence than this, neither the wisdom nor the goodness of God exacted; especially, since this obscurity rather tended

to raise his hopes, than to deject him; for when *Adam* heard that *the seed of the woman* was to destroy the evil spirit, he undoubtedly understood *Eve* to be that woman; and some issue of his, by her, to be that seed. This naturally tended, to revive him into a lively hope of the speedy restoration of his lost estate; and as naturally tended, to establish a thorough reconciliation between him and his wife; because, without such a reconciliation, their hopes could not be compassed. Whereas, without this motive of amity, some contention on this occasion had been inevitable; and possibly, the feud might otherwise have been carried on, to their mutual destruction; nay, probably, without this, the particular punishment denounced against *Eve*, would have made her cold in the business of a reconciliation; and, perhaps, to such a degree, as totally to prevent it; especially, when it must naturally begin with submission and patience on her part, who had been the cause of her husband's calamity.

Now that they had lively hopes on this head, at least, enough to support them in a right sense of religion, appears from *Eve's* exultation at the birth of *Cain*: *I have gotten a man from the Lord*, says she, *i. e.* I have gotten a man thro' the signal favour and mercy of God. Now this extraordinary

exultation cannot be supposed to arise from the sense of the bare privilege of bearing issue; for that privilege she had in common with the meanest brutes; which she could not but know before this time; and therefore her transport must arise, from some prospect of some extraordinary advantage from this issue; and that could be no other than the destruction of her enemy.

AND supposing *Abel* to have been born after *Cain* had attained the age of manhood, as possibly he might; and after the hopes of *Eve* had languished, by observing the perverse disposition of her first son: Her disappointment in these hopes, was, probably enough, the reason why she called her second son *Abel*, *i. e.* Vanity; - concluding, from the little prospect she had, in that person, on whom she had fixed her hopes, that no child of hers should be the promised seed; and therefore it was vanity to expect it. But as *Cain's* perverseness, and untowardly disposition, was probably the reason why she despaired of his being the promised seed: and, in that spirit of despair, called her next son's name *Vanity*; from the infirmity usual with parents, to believe, that no son can equal the first; so there is reason to believe, that upon *Abel's* discovering a better disposition, as he grew up, and being afterwards accepted by God, in preference to his elder brother,

brother, her hopes again revived, that he was the promised seed. This appears highly probable, from her declaration at the birth of *Seth*; *And she bare a son*, (saith the text) *and called his name Seth*; For God, saith she, *hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel*: Because (for so it is in the original) *Cain slew him*. From hence, 'tis evident, that she took *Abel* to be the seed, till *Cain* slew him; and afterwards, when she found that God had given her another son, distinguished from those then in being, by this remarkable character, that he was begotten *in the likeness of Adam*, and after his image, i. e. framed with that appearance of all those advantages which *Adam* derived from the hand of God, far above any of his sons; (for this is the only rational interpretation of the text) she then concluded, that this was certainly *the seed*; and that God had given him to her to effect that, which *Abel* would have effected, if he had not been cut off by his brother. Thus we see, that the obscurity, in which it pleased God to foretel the destruction of the evil spirit, gave rise to a succession of happy hopes in the breast of *Adam* and *Eve*: who, if they had known that this happiness was to be postponed for four thousand years, would, in all probability, have inevitably fallen into the extremity of despair.

IF it be still asked, *How the denunciation of enmity betwixt the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, is fulfilled?*

I ANSWER, Every way. For first, If you take the text in the *figurative* sense, we know that as good men are in the scriptures called the *children of God*, so wicked men are called the *children of the devil*. And we have but too much proof of the implacable enmity of this wicked race against the *seed of the woman* to this very day. And if we had no other proof, their restless resistance to the clearest evidence on this head; the necessity they lay us under of proving the same truths over and over again, a thousand different ways, would sure be a sufficient demonstration of it.

OR if the text be taken in a *literal* sense, we see a strong antipathy subsisting between serpents and mankind to this day. Nay, this antipathy is so strong, that, as the juices of the serpent are noxious to man, so *Aristotle* assures us, that the human juices are noxious to serpents: His expression, on this occasion, is very remarkable; he tells us, that the *human saliva is hostile to serpents*; an expression so full, and pointed to the accomplishment of this sentence, that, if he had not wrote it more than three hundred

dred years before the birth of *Christ*, he had certainly been treated by our adversaries as a sworn accomplice with *Christians*, to prove the strict completion of it: So fully do this great man's observations verify the very letter of the sentence here denounced! So fully is this sentence executed in every sense! If you take it in the figurative sense, our adversaries themselves evince the accomplishment of it; If you take it in the literal sense, this enmity is proved by the testimony of the most accurate observer of all mankind, who cannot easily be suspected of conspiring with *Christians* to manifest the completion of it.

BUT *does the serpent feed upon dust?*

I ANSWER, Most infallibly. Nor, perhaps, could he otherwise subsist in those sandy and dusty deserts to which God has, in a good measure, condemned him; though commentators content themselves with explaining this part of the sentence, from the necessity he is under of eating his food on the ground, and so swallowing dust with it; but if this is thought, by some, not sufficiently to distinguish the curse of the serpent from the natural condition of other creatures, it should be remembered, that a further and more diligent enquiry assures us, that he actually eats the dry, dusty

earth *. And there is not the least reason to believe, that any other beast in the world does feed in the same wretched manner, except the scorpion; who is also accounted, by *Celsus*, a kind of serpent. Nor is the point so clear in relation to the scorpion; though out of all doubt with regard to the serpent. So strangely is the sentence of God executed in every sense, and in every part, to a tittle!

AND as the expression of *licking the dust*, signifies, according to the *Hebrew* idiom, the lowest state of depression and humiliation to which an enemy can be reduced; 'tis not improbable, that this metaphor was taken from that state of dejection and degradation, to which the serpent was now reduced in the presence of *Adam*: And doubtless God sunk the serpent into this abject condition, at that time, as a significant emblem to *Adam* of that utter prostration and subjection, to which his evil inmate should be finally doomed, by the *seed of the woman*; at that dreadful day, when (as the *Psalmist* prophesied of him) *his enemies* should *lick the dust*, *Pf. lxxii. 9.*

AND thus, having explained to you all the parts of the sentence passed upon the ser-

* See *Bochart* and *Pliny* of serpents.

pent, with the surprizing accomplishment of it in all; I now proceed to explain the sentence pass'd upon the woman at the same time; which is as follows:

UNTO *the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

The woman's sentence considered.

SOME part of this sentence may perhaps now seem no way strange to us, who every day, see every part of it accomplished. And yet, a more accurate observation upon the condition of all other creatures, will make the accomplishment of it astonishing, to every man that thinks: and therefore, to clear this prophecy of pain to the woman, we must observe, that it consists of two parts; *first*, the pain or sorrow of conception, or breeding: And *secondly*, the pain of childbirth. — As to the first of these, 'tis remarkable, that a woman is the only creature under heaven, that we know of, which has ordinarily any sorrow from conception *.

* This *Aristotle* expressly affirms, and only excepts the instance of a mare conceiving by an ass; and, in general, where there is any thing monstrous in the fœtus. — And, doubtless, the case is the same where the fœtus suffers from any accidental hurt or distortion in the matrix.

If it be asked, How it can be known, that other creatures have no sickness on the same occasion; I answer, That we can judge of the sickness and health of brutes, by as sure indications, as of our own; tho' not always so certainly, in what part their distempers are seated. And to put us out of all doubt in the present case, we know, that other creatures are in more perfection of health, and strength, and habit, after conception, than before. Whereas, 'tis the reverse of all this with womankind. How miserable their condition ordinarily is, on that occasion, is sufficiently known to every reader of common observation. *Aristotle* mentions about ten vexatious maladies, of various kinds, which await them in that season of sickness: And *Pliny* begins his account of that matter in these very remarkable words: *Headachs, vertigos, mists before the eyes, a loathing of food, &c. are the indications that a man is begun.* And as he begins it remarkably, he concludes it no less so, by observing, that the end of all this vexatious toil, is frequently defeated *by the snuff of a candle.*

MORE than this; as if all the singular misery of that wretched state, were not sufficient, the woman's conceptions are multiplied. She is remarkably subject to abortions and false conceptions above all other animals

animals in the world: And when her conceptions come to maturity, there is remarkably a greater mortality of her issue, than of that of any other creature; at least, one half of her off-spring perish, before they can answer the ends of their being; that is, before they attain the age of seventeen years: And as her grief on these occasions, is more excessive than that of any other creature, in the letter of the sentence, *Her sorrow and her conceptions are greatly multiplied*, before she answers the ends of Providence and society. — And to crown all, she brings her off-spring into the world (which was the second part of the punishment denounced against her) with remarkably more pain than any creature upon the face of the earth. And if *Aristotle*, the best observer in the world, did not assure us of this (as he does) our own observation could not fail to do it. Nay, common sense must teach us, that if other creatures were exposed to equal pain and danger on these occasions, all our care would scarce be sufficient even to preserve the several species in being; and much less to preserve them in any number sufficient to answer the several ends of life.

So singularly, so emphatically true is that part of the woman's punishment also,

so, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children *.

Now I would ask every candid and reasonable man upon earth, How this comes to pass? They will not, I presume, arraign Almighty God of incapacity to form woman in more perfection, or subject to less infelicity in this point; and, if they will not, 'tis evident that unless all this infelicity be the effect of a curse, and in punishment of guilt, human nature is unequally dealt by: In a word, this misery must be the effect either of hard treatment, or just punishment; there is no medium. Now the infinite goodness and perfection of the Divine Nature will not suffer us to suspect him of the former imputation; and therefore all this misery must demonstrably be the effect of a curse; a just curse upon *Eve*, entailed by her on her daughters.

AND here I must once more put a plain question to our adversaries, as I already did on another occasion, and may perhaps have more occasion to do, in the course of these enquiries. Do they know, that this misery, which awaits women from conception

* This is the more remarkable, inasmuch as several circumstances, in her make, naturally promise more ease to her, in this case, than to any other animal.

and child-birth, is demonstrably the effect of a curse! If they do not know it, I must own, I cannot yet think them the *wisest* men in the world: but if they do know it, and yet deride *Christians* for believing it; the glory of being the *wickedest*, can, I think, scarcely be contested with them*.

AND the subsequent part of her punishment is in the same analogy: *Thy desire*, or, (as it is in the original) *thy appetite shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*, i. e. forasmuch as you have indulged yourself in this instance, without the advice or consent of your husband, (which surely should not have been done in a point of such importance) you shall from henceforth depend upon the will

The latter part of the woman's sentence considered.

* As this offence of eating the forbidden fruit introduced irregularity of passion and appetite; and particularly, that appetite which is to this day most predominant in human nature, it pleased God to leave this memorial of it upon the woman, who was first in the offence. — Now that it had this effect, appears, as from other proofs, so, I think, fully and clearly from the covering which *Adam* and *Eve* made use of soon after their offence, for there is no imaginable reason for that covering, but one; and that one sufficiently demonstrates, that irregularity and violence of appetite, independent of the dominion of reason, was the effect of their offence. And forasmuch as this offence began in *Eve*, what could be a more proper punishment of it in her, or a more certain memorial of that punishment to the end of the world, than the misery which should attend the indulgence of that appetite in herself, and in her daughters, from generation to generation?

of your husband, and he shall have dominion over you. And, I believe, they, who are most concerned in this punishment, (and surely a severe punishment it is, to have their wills perpetually subject to the will of others) will not deny, that they feel the severe effects of it over the face of the whole earth at this day.

AND that this subjection in the woman, is the effect of a curse, consequent to that offence which wrought our fall, is evident: Because, on supposition that human nature were in a state of perfection, where reason ruled, and perverseness had no place, there seems to be no imaginable reason, why one sex should be in subjection to the other. And accordingly we find, that the woman was given at first under no other character, but that of a companion; because *it was not good for man to be alone*; nor did *Adam* consider her under any other character: for, when he excuses his offence to Almighty God, by charging it upon his compliance with *Eve*, he say, *The woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* — The woman, whom thou gavest to be *with me*, i. e. whom thou gavest to be my associate and companion, — without the least hint of subjection, or dependency. Nor was there the least reason

reason for any in that state, as I shew'd before.

I COME now, in the last place, to the sentence denounced upon the man; which needs little explication. He is doomed to a condition of perpetual slavery, for obeying his wife, rather than his Maker; the earth is cursed for his sake, and (instead of the delicious fruits of paradise) he is doomed to eat of it in that accursed state: and confined to the herb of the field, in common with the brutal herd; till death reduce him to the common dust, from which he was formed.

The sentence passed upon *Adam*.

THE wisdom, the goodness, and the justice of God are sufficiently conspicuous throughout this whole sentence; more especially in these three instances:

First, IN decreeing, that toil and drudgery should be the consequence of departing from an easy and a rational obedience; which hath been the curse and punishment of all his posterity, in every instance of disobedience to their Maker, from that day to this.

Secondly, IN making the earth less desirable to man, when his guilt had reduced him to a necessity of leaving it. And that

also is yet done in the train of calamities and sickness, which for the most part makes life a load, before its last period, and death desirable.

AND *thirdly*, In keeping those appetites and passions which had now broke loose from the restraint of reason, within some bounds, by subduing their impetuosity with hard labour; which unsubdued, or supported in luxury and idleness, would run riot; and make himself, and every body about him, miserable. As it is seen among his sons at this day.

AND, to preclude man from all possibility of reversing any part of this sentence, we are assured that he was, soon after this, sent out of paradise, and debarred from the tree of life. This caution the wisdom and goodness of God exacted; forasmuch as, when sin had entailed calamity and corruption upon human nature; in that condition, to perpetuate life, would be to perpetuate misery.

AND now, upon the whole, What is it that infidelity hath to object, with any degree of clear unprejudiced reason, against this account of the creation and fall of man? — Was he created in that condition, and under those circumstances, which the truest wisdom

wisdom, must, upon the best principles of philosophy, the clearest dictates of reason, and the fullest conviction of experience, pronounce upon the whole, most eligible, and most advantageous? — And what would he more?

IF the wisest man that ever was born into the world, had his own situation and circumstances of existence in his choice, could he form to himself a wish beyond the advantages of *Adam* in paradise? — To come into the world, in the full vigour of strength, health, and reason; with a soul superior to the tyranny, or even the temptation of appetite; and a body impassible to the injuries of weather! privileged from disease and death! unincumbered with cloaths, and yet unconscious of shame, the companion of guilt! encompassed with all the delights of sense, and filled with all the joys of innocence! so very happy, as not to be acquainted with evil! a circumstance which human wisdom would have deemed a defect: and consequently, a condition of happiness, which nothing but inspiration could teach! above the invention of the greatest genius that ever was born into the world!

MAN, without sin, was without misery; tied to no more toil, than reason, and use, and a philosophick enquiry into the nature

of things exacted; — free from all vexatious remembrances of the past, or anticipations of future evil? — Nothing but happiness, in possession, or in prospect! a whole creation submitted to his dominion, and ensured to his posterity! an inexhaustible supply of entertainment for every organ of sense, and every faculty of soul! with one companion, to share, and double every enjoyment; and both, as fully furnished with means to communicate happiness, as fitted to receive it, — without any interruption from mortal infirmities, or allay from passion and perverseness.

A SCENE! where the present vanities of life could have no place; — where palaces (the inventions of pride and infirmity) would be but incumbrances upon earth, and interruptions from heaven! where pomp and pageantry, could they be conceived, must at the same instant be despised; despised for what they are, specious folly!

O *Adam*, beyond imagination happy! uninterrupted health! untainted innocence! nor perverseness of will, nor perturbation of appetite! a heart, upright! a conscience, clear! a judgment, unclouded! a glorious world, — an universe, — to contemplate! to enjoy! — And the Author of that universe, the source of all existence, his God, his Creator,
his

his Benefactor, — to bless, to glorify, to adore, to obey.

AND now, What have mortal vanity and weakness to object to this condition, and this account of the first man? since it is evident, that if man ever came into the world, he must come into it, under most of these circumstances: — and if ever he came into it, in a way entirely worthy of infinite wisdom and goodness, he must come into it, under them all.

THIS was a creation, and a state of things, worthy a God; — and this account of his creation, worthy of a writer inspired by God; — inspired to convey it, in all that simplicity and strength, and in consequence of both these, that sublimity of style, that best became a being, who knew his works above embellishment! the subject supported its own dignity, and was incapable of any accession from human wisdom, or the arts of eloquence; and all the exceptions that ever were, or ever will be made to it, will in the end be found the effects of human blindness and depravity; the necessary consequences of that very fall, (of *Adam*) which we all feel, and yet have the folly and the front to dispute.

BUT *why did he fall from this felicity?*

Ask rather, vain man, Why he was a creature? Why he was dependent of his Creator? And why he was amenable to him? Had he been incapable of error, and superior to temptation, he had been God; — had he been independent, he had been no creature; — and had he been unaccountable, he had been irrational, and independent; — and could we suppose such an absurdity, as an independent creature, can we imagine it would be a happy circumstance of existence, to an intelligent being, of limited powers, to be exempted from the guidance, and protection, of infinite wisdom, and unbounded power? And if duty and dependence be the necessary consequences of creation, must not chastisement or annihilation, be the necessary consequence of disobedience to the commands of that great Being that governs the world? — And is not any penalty, less than annihilation, an act of mercy? And is not a new trial, under a capacity of recovering more, even by an imperfect obedience, than was forfeited by a deliberate disobedience, an act of the highest mercy imaginable *?

BUT

* And that this is the case of *Adam*, and all his descendants, can be no doubt with any *Christian* of an enlarged mind; who believes *Jesus Christ* to be the *Lamb slain* for the sins of mankind, *from the foundation of the world*. — For why he should be
con-

BUT how could Adam fall, by eating an apple?

TELL me rather, arrogant questioner, (whoever thou art) How he could fall otherwise? Could he fall but by disobedience! and where could he disobey but in relation to some restraint of natural liberty? And is there a created intelligence, whose natural liberty should not be restrained? And what natural liberty should our first parents be restrained in, except that, where indulgence would be fatal? Should they not be restrained from their own destruction? Had moral restraints, strictly speaking, (the idle objection urged by infidels *) any place in paradise? Most certainly they had not.

How then could man be in more perfection than now? Was not this an act of intemperance? and as weak a one as any of his posterity hath since fallen into?

I ANSWER, it was intemperance; but it was more intemperance of knowledge, than

considered as slain from the foundation of the world, unless his death was of universal use from that period, is, to me I own, inconceivable; and I am very sure that St. Paul's epistle to the *Romans* justifies me in this opinion.

* See the conference with a theist, ——— and Sir *Walter Raleigh's* Hist.

food: — A circumstance singly sufficient to establish the credit of the *Mosaic* history; for though *Moses* is short upon the subject; yet, whoever considers the point, with any comprehension, will find that *Adam* and *Eve* were inaccessible, at least impregnable, to temptation, any other way. — They can scarcely be imagined capable of one wish without their reach, except that of wisdom: And the intemperance of that very wish (which infidels have urged as an argument of infirmity equal to ours) is to me, I own, a proof of superior perfection; for knowledge, is always desirable, in proportion to the light and extent of the understanding that seeks after it; and therefore every superior degree of intelligence, short of infinite, must have proportionably a superior desire of knowledge. — This the tempter well knew, (probably, by woeful experience) and adapted his wiles to this infirmity, with admirable address. — He saw *Adam* and *Eve* every way superior to the brute world, (and I am persuaded the very brutes were not then unruly in their appetites) — and therefore a temptation to them (*Adam* and *Eve*) from mere appetite (could any have been offered) had been a weakness contemptible in a mere serpent? * but a temptation to be made like

* This rightly considered, the allegorical interpretation of the serpent's being the symbol of pleasure, &c. will be found altogether senseless and absurd.

to God in knowledge, was a temptation to excellence, which no limited intelligence could be proof against, (and must always be strong in proportion to the extent of that intelligence): and what could be so strong as delusion, to hope this from the fruit of a tree, as *Eve's* seeing a brute become rational, as she thought, by the vertue of that very fruit? — And that this was the cause of her delusion, I have already proved, to the evidence of an axiom.

AND doubtless the strength of this delusion, was a main reason with their Creator, to receive the lapsed pair into mercy; notwithstanding their deliberate violation of an express command, immediately given them by himself; a circumstance, which, without abatement from the greatness of the temptation, had rendered their disobedience utterly unpardonable.

UPON the whole, What can make more for the truth of any revelation, than that every real difficulty, every seeming absurdity, every tittle objected to it by infidelity, is found, upon a full enquiry, to be a new evidence and confirmation of its truth?

LET infidels then object, and let believers be undismayed! (I had almost said, Let them rejoice) in full assurance, that every objection to the truth of divine revelation, will end in new evidence for it.





DISSERTATION VIII.

Of Sacrifices.



THE next interposition of the Divine Being, which we meet with in the Scriptures, is, in the cloathing of *Adam* and *Eve*; and soon after follows an account of his acceptance of *Abel's* offering, and his non-acceptance of *Cain's*; — from whence men have been generally led to believe, that sacrifices were of divine institution. Let us then examine what evidence can be collected, either from scripture or reason on this head, and then see, whether they both lead to the same conclusion.

IN *Hebrews* xi. 4. the author of that Epistle tells, that *by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness, that he was righteous,*

122 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it, he being dead, yet speaketh.

NOW the sacrifices here referred to, are evidently these, of which *Moses* gives us some short account in the fourth chapter of *Genesis*, where he tells us, that *in process of time, Cain, brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain, and his offering, he had not respect.* He then proceeds to tell us, that, upon this preference, *Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.*

IN these words it is plainly implied, that *Abel*, acted well, *i. e.* righteously, in the business of his sacrifice, and that *Cain* acted not well, *i. e.* unrighteously, in the business of his sacrifice; and that in consequence of this defect, sin lay at his door.

NOW this righteousness in *Abel*, by which he obtained the preference to his brother, the apostle ascribes to his faith.

By *faith* *Abel* offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than *Cain*, by which he obtained witness, that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.

HERE we see, that, according to the scripture account, the first act of worship, which God accepted with open marks of approbation, from the foundation of the world, was a sacrifice; in which the life of one of his creatures was devoutly offered up to him: and that what made it acceptable, was the faith of the offerer; by which he obtained an attestation from God himself, that he was righteous.

IN this account of the preference of *Abel* to *Cain*, are contained two points of doctrine, which are remarkably the objects of ridicule with the infidel world, above all the other duties of religion, that ever were enjoined under the *Jewish* or *Christian* oeconomy.

THE first is, that sacrifice was from the beginning acceptable to God: and the next, that faith made it so.

FOR some think nothing more absurd, than to imagine, that God could ever be gratified or appeased by the destruction of his creatures. And, if this action could not
in

in its own nature, be acceptable to God,
How could faith make it so?

Now, to clear these objections, which, I own, are plausible, let us first enquire how far reason can evince, that sacrifices were of divine institution; and secondly, what light the scriptures give us on that head; — and if both these evidently lead to one conclusion, — our last enquiry must be, what ends were intended by Almighty God, to be served by this institution.

I. THEN, I am to enquire whether reason evinces that sacrifices were of divine institution. — And in order to clear this, we must have recourse to one plain principle; or, in other words, to a plain truth, which no candid reader will, I believe, contest; which is this:

THAT whatever practice obtains universally in the world, for any considerable number of years, must obtain in it, either from some dictate of reason, or some demand of nature, or some principle of interest, or some powerful influence or injunction of some Being of universal authority.

Now, that sacrifices obtained universally, for many ages, over all the regions of the known world, I believe, will not be denied
by

by any man, who makes the least pretence to the knowledge of antiquity. And, that the practice did not prevail from any dictate of reason, the adversaries of revelation will, I believe, readily own; it being evident, that unprejudiced reason never could antecedently dictate, that destroying the best of our fruits and creatures, could be an office acceptable to God, but quite the contrary. Also that it did not prevail from any demand of nature, is undeniable: for, I believe, no man will say, that we have any natural instinct or appetite to gratify, in spilling the blood of an innocent, inoffensive creature upon the earth; or burning his body upon an altar. Nor could there be any temptation from appetite, to do this, in those ages, when the whole sacrifice was consumed by fire; or when, if it were not, yet men wholly abstained from flesh; as there is all the reason in the world to believe, that, at least, the religious part of them did for the first sixteen hundred years from the creation. And consequently, this practice did not owe its origin to any principle of interest; and so there could be no priest-craft in the case, during that period.

Also in after ages, the duty of sacrificing belonged to the father of the family; who was more interested in the well-being of it, than any other person whatsoever; and
con-

consequently, could have no interest in creating an unnecessary expence. And after this, when fathers grew up into princes, by the increase of their families; the priesthood, we know, became an appendage of royalty: and sacrifices were then also at the sacrificer's own expence.

WE also know, that libations, and offerings of several kinds, were the constant practice of private men in their own families; and that priests had no perquisites from them; nor can they, with any colour of reason, be suspected to have had any emolument of any kind, from this practice, in any region of the earth, till more than two thousand years, from the first institution of this rite. Though, if they had, 'tis evident, that the advantages derived upon any particular set of men, from any practice, is far from being a proof, that such a practice had no original foundation, but in the subtilty and interest of that particular set of men. In truth, the supposition is as absurd, as any thing can well be imagined; and will affect every profession under heaven, as well as the priesthood; from the prince upon the throne, to the meanest officer and artizan in the common-wealth. — Nay, in truth, will affect every profession in the world, much more than the priesthood: because, that is the only profession, which was originally

nally disinterested, in the discharge of duty proper to it.

WE own indeed, that orators in *Rome*, did plead the causes of their clients, in the flourishing state of the common-wealth, without any such fees as are now paid to pleaders amongst us, on like occasions: but this by no means clears them, either of the suspicion or proof of being mercenary in that conduct; because, that, was the sure and known way to the highest honours, and most profitable employments in the common-wealth. But the father of the family cannot be so much as suspected of having any interest of any kind, in lessening his own power, by lessening his own property, in the business of sacrifices; which was indisputably the case. And therefore the priesthood, is the only profession in the world, which is clear of all suspicion of interest, in the business of its profession, for more than two thousand years from its first institution; at least, if the priesthood be allowed as old as sacrifices: and if it be not, 'tis plain that sacrifices are not the invention of priestcraft.

AND this observation should, methinks, make any infidel, who had any remains of modesty, blush for such insults upon any order of men, as are demonstrably founded
in

in ignorance and untruth. Since it is demonstrable, that, if sacrifices were the invention of priest-craft, priests practis'd their craft to their own sole detriment, for more than two thousand years; which surely was a very strange kind of policy. And, if sacrifices be two thousand years older than priests, certainly it were somewhat hard to place the invention of them to the score of priest-craft.

SINCE then sacrifices are demonstrably not the invention of priest-craft; nor the dictate of reason, nor the demand of nature; I should be glad, that infidels would so much as attempt to tell us, with any colour of reason and proof, how they prevailed so universally in the world, otherwise than from divine appointment? How any practice could obtain in the world, to which mankind, where neither urged by the interest and subtilty of any particular set of men, nor by any dictate of reason, nor by any instinct or demand of nature, nor by any interest of any kind; but, quite the contrary, in direct contradiction to every principle of reason, and nature, and interest; (for the destruction of innocent and useful creatures, is against reason, against nature, and against interest): I say, how such a practice could prevail, and prevail universally, is impossible to be accounted for, but from some powerful and irre-

irresistible influence of example, or injunction of authority. And what example could have such influence, except that of *Adam*, or what authority could have such power, except that of God, is to me, I own, utterly inconceivable.

IF you say, superstitions prevail unaccountably in the world ; I answer, That all superstition has its origin in true religion ; and may, for the most part, be easily traced up to its true fountain. All superstition is abuse ; and all abuse supposes a right and proper use. The very idea and definition of superstition, is, a superstructure of extravagance, and folly, and falshood of some kind ; and all such superstructures necessarily suppose some foundation of regularity, and reason, and truth. This is the case even of little particular superstitious practices of particular times, and places : but where any practice is universal, there it must demonstrably have some universal cause. And that, as I have shewn you, can be no other in the case before us, but either God, the founder of the world, or *Adam*, the founder of the human race ; from whom it was derived to all his posterity.

IF infidels say this practice is from God, they then give up the point in dispute ; if they say, from the first father of mankind,

(which is the only thing that can be said with any colour of reason) the question will still recur, Why *Adam* practised a rite so cruel, and so contrary to reason and nature? Or why he should propagate a practice to his posterity, which he could not but know, would be so detrimental to them, as the regular, annual destruction of the very prime of all the creatures, that would be most useful to mankind, to the end of the world?

WE see, indeed, that some parents are now, weak, and wicked enough, to encourage their own vices and extravagancies in their issue; (tho' the greater part, even of weak and wicked parents, take the quite contrary course): but then, where they do countenance their own faults and follies in their children, it always is, in such instances, as carry pleasure, or profit, or advantage of some kind along with them; and the reason of this is not hard to be discerned. Sometimes they think the practice of their children, a plea for the same practice in themselves; at other times, they are urged to this conduct, from the hopes of conveying the pleasures, or profits, or advantages of those practices to their children, without the evils they themselves suffered from them: they flatter themselves, that their issue, warned by the example of the father's miscarriages, may obtain every thing desirable in their iniquity,
with

with more security : but sacrifice was such a practice, as, unless enjoined by the authority of God, must of necessity be detrimental ; without any prospect of pleasure, or profit, or advantage of any kind. And therefore, unless *Adam* was worse than an idiot, it was impossible he could enjoin his posterity such a practice, from any other motive than divine authority . or, if he had, it is unimaginable why they should universally obey him, from any other motive ; unless they also were idiots for two thousand years successively. Which surely it will ill-become the advocates for the strength and sufficiency of human reason, to admit. —Nay this is not all: for it will follow, that the *Egyptians*, and *Greeks*, and *Romans* were likewise worse than idiots, in their turn ; that the whole heathen world were brutes and monsters for two thousand years more, in the practice of this very rite : Nay, they actually are so, to this day. In a word, either this rite had some foundation in true religion, which swayed the whole world to the practice of it for four thousand years, and yet sways the heathen part of it to this day ; or else, this boasted principle of reason, which could suffer men to go on in a train of such absurdity, and barbarity, for four thousand, nay, for six thousand, years together, is a very bad and insufficient guide. One of these positions, is indisputably true ; if the latter is admitted, then revelation was

absolutely necessary, to reform and to instruct the world, at the time that *Jesus Christ* came into it : if the former, then sacrifices were of divine institution. Which was the thing to be proved. — Let the adversaries of revelation, take which side of this dilemma they like best.

AND thus, having seen how far reason evinces sacrifices to be of divine institution, I now proceed to enquire what light the scripture gives us upon that head.

AND first, I shewed you, in the introduction to this dissertation, that God gave *Abel* sure proof of his acceptance of his sacrifice ; and also gave testimony of his having done *well*, in that act of adoration. And from hence I clearly infer, that sacrifices were of divine institution. For, 'tis certain, that the destruction of an innocent creature, is not, in itself, an action acceptable to God ; and therefore, nothing but duty could make it acceptable : and nothing, but the command of God, could make it a duty, in the case before us. We know, that no being has any right to the lives of the creatures, but their Creator, or those, on whom he confers that right : and 'tis certain, that God had not yet given man a right to the creatures, even for necessary food : and much less, for unnecessary cruelty. And there-

therefore, nothing, but his command, could create a right to take away their lives.

'Tis also evident, that killing an innocent creature, cannot, in its own nature, be properly said to be doing *well*. And therefore, since *Abel* is acknowledged by God to have *done well*, in killing the firstlings of his flock in sacrifice, 'tis evident, he must have done this, for some very good and just reason; and what reason could justify him in doing it, but the command of God?

IN truth, no action is just or good, otherwise than as it is conformable to the will of God, either revealed, or established in the nature of things: And that this action was conformable to the divine will, could only be known by revelation, *i. e.* by being commanded. And therefore the rectitude of it, in *Abel*, could only arise from obedience. And, that obedience could justify it, can be no doubt to any man, who knows, *that obedience is more acceptable with God than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams,* 1 Sam. xv. 22.

AGAIN; the apostle assures us, that *Abel* offered a more excellent sacrifice than *Cain*, by faith: And what this faith is, he explains in some following instances. For example, he tells us, that *Noah prepared the ark, by*

faith; — that *Abraham*, by *faith*, left his own country, and went not knowing whither; — and that *Sarah*, by *faith*, received strength to conceive seed.

Now we know, that *Noah* built the ark by the express command of God; and with assurance from God, that he, and his house, should be saved from that destruction, which was coming upon the rest of the world. We are assured, that *Abraham* left his country and kindred by the express command of God, and went into a country, which God had assured him, he should receive for an heritage. What was then the faith of *Noah*, and the faith of *Abraham*, but obedience to the commands of God, and a firm trust and confidence in the assurances he gave them, however seemingly improbable and unlikely to be fulfilled? And what was *Sarah's* faith, but a firm dependence upon God, for the performance of a promise, naturally impossible to be fulfilled? And can we have any doubt that *Abel's* faith also consisted in obedience, and an assurance of being acceptable by that obedience, tho' in an act of duty, otherwise most unlikely to be pleasing to God? as that of the destruction of his innocent creatures, certainly was. An action, than which, nothing could be, more, in appearance, ill fitted, to appease the divine wrath, or obtain the divine favour. And yet, a
ready

ready obedience to that great Being, who commanded it, made the action and the actor righteous. And 'tis evident, nothing but such a faith, as prompted *Abel* to that obedience, ever could make such an action acceptable to God, in any man whatsoever, from the foundation of the world.

BUT here it may be objected, *that Abel's sacrifice might be accepted, merely because he was a good man; and Cain's rejected, because he was an ill man.*

I ANSWER, That as this is a scriptural fact, we have no way to judge of it, but from the lights left us in the scripture. — Now, from the accounts left us of sacrifices in the scripture, we find, that offerings of fruits, were sacrifices of thanksgiving; and offerings of creatures upon the altar, were sacrifices of atonement for sin; (nor were fruits accepted in atonement, except in cases of extreme poverty, *Lev. vii*) Now 'tis evident, that all men have sins to be atoned, as they have divine favours to be acknowledged; and that atonement should naturally precede acknowledgment, as the foundation of all other religious duties should be laid in repentance; since no office of devotion, can be acceptable with God, without a precedent resolution of amendment in the offender; from hence it was,

K 4

that

that by the *Mosaic* law, confession was to precede the trespass offering, *Levit. v.* If men expect to be accepted of God, they must offer the sacrifice of righteousness; and there is no righteousness without repentance. — Now *Abel*, tho' a better man, offered such a sacrifice, as plainly implied a consciousness of guilt, which called for atonement; and consequently, his, was a sacrifice of repentance; confessing guilt, and imploring pardon; and as such, was accepted of God. — Whereas *Cain*, tho' a worse man, expected to be accepted, without repentance, or atonement. — And this seems to me very clearly implied in God's answer to him; *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door*; i. e. If you are righteous and unfinning, you shall be accepted, as such, without sacrifice; — but if you are unrighteous, sin lieth at your door, and must lie there, till it is removed by repentance and atonement, (doubtless, such atonement as God himself had before appointed.)

BUT it may be farther objected; *If Moses knew that sacrifices were originally instituted by God, with manifest marks of acceptance, as in the case of ABEL, — Why did he not give a clear, distinct account both of the institution, and the manner of acceptance?*

I ANSWER, Because such a relation was unnecessary. The *Jews*, to whom he wrote, knew very well, that their own sacrifices were of divine institution ; and that God manifested his acceptance of them, upon the first solemn oblation after that institution, by miraculous fire from the divine presence, as we read in the ninth chapter of *Leviticus* ; and they could have no reason to doubt, that they were so instituted, and so accepted from the beginning. Nor needed they to be then informed of a truth, which, doubtless, a clear, uninterrupted tradition, had long made familiar to them.

BESIDES this, there is reason to believe, that this rite was loaded with many additional ceremonies, at its second institution, under *Moses* ; in order to guard the *Jews*, from the infections of the heathen in this point ; and therefore, it might not be proper to explain the matter more fully, to a rebellious people : who might think themselves ill used, by any additional burden, of trouble, or expence, in this practice ; however really necessary to their well-being.

AND thus, having shewn, both from reason and scripture, that sacrifices were originally instituted by God, I proceed, in the next place, to enquire what ends were intended

138 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

tended by Almighty God to be served by this institution.

Now the true way to judge rightly of the wisdom of any institution, established at any certain time, is, to consider what was necessary, or expedient to be done, on such an occasion. And if the institution is found to be well and wisely fitted, to answer the exigences of the occasion, then we may safely pronounce such an institution, wise, and well appointed.

WHEREAS then, reason evinces, that sacrifices were instituted by God ; and the scripture shews this to have been done soon after the fall : therefore, to judge rightly of the wisdom of this institution, we should enquire, what was necessary to be done, as things then stood, between God and his creatures. And this will be best known, by enquiring, what was the condition of his creatures at that time.

IN the first place then, we know, that *Adam* and *Eve* were now, sinners : received into mercy ; but in danger of relapsing. Surely then it was necessary, that they should have a sense of their guilt, and of the mercy shewn them ; and that they should be guarded against the danger of relapsing — In the next place, 'tis certain that they had forfeited their lives, by their transgression : and if so, was it not necessary, they should be minded of the forfeit
they

they had made, in order to a just and grateful sense of the goodness of God in remitting it? — They were also now, naked, and infirm: both decency and health required that they should be cloathed.---They were also doomed to die, and to molder into dust; as a punishment of their sin. 'Twas surely fit they should know the nature of their punishment, in order to judge from thence of the heinousness of their offence; and in order to be better prepared to undergo it.---More than all this; God knew that they were to beget children, who should inherit their own corruption, and infirmity. And certainly 'twas fit, that they also, should be early deterred from sin; and have early monitions of the goodness and mercy of God.

ALL this was evidently expedient to be done at this time: (as shall be shewn more at large immediately) and if all these purposes of wisdom and mercy could be effectually attained by any one institution; certainly, that institution must needs be wise, and well-appointed.— Now we find one institution appointed about this time, and but one; *viz.* that of sacrifices. It remains then, that we now carefully enquire, whether any, or all these ends could be attained by that institution.

AND in order to do this more clearly, I must remind you, of what I observed in a former dissertation, that a sense of dependence upon God, was for *Adam's* interest, even before the fall: and that some memorial of it, was necessary, in manifestation of that state; and in order to keep up a constant sense of it, in his mind. Now if a sense of dependence upon the supreme Being, was necessary in a state of innocence and perfection; surely much more in a state of guilt and infirmity: when the guidance, assistance, and restraint, of infinite wisdom, and almighty power, were much more wanted. In a state of perfection, such a memorial of dependence was evidently most proper for *Adam*, as was best fitted, to mind him, at one, of the felicity of that happy state in which God had placed him, and the danger of losing it. To this purpose, the tree of life, and the tree of death, were both placed full before his eyes; in a very distinguished and remarkable situation; as a sure and constant monition, that God, had placed life and death in his own choice; and that his happiness, and misery, depended wholly upon himself.

WHEN man had forfeited his life, by his transgression; and God, notwithstanding, decreed to receive him into mercy; nothing, certainly, could better become the wisdom and goodness of God, than the establishment of some institution, which might, at once, be a
monition

monition both of the mercy of God, and the punishment due to sin; And forasmuch, as God knew that man would often sin; and should often receive mercy; it was necessary, that institution should be such, as might frequently be repeated; and in the repetition, frequently remind man, of his own endless demerit, and the infinite goodness of God to him.

AND what institution could do this more fully or more effectually than that of sacrifice for sin? sacrifice for sin plainly teaching these two points.

1st. THAT every sin was a forfeiture of the offender's life; And,

2^{dly}. THAT notwithstanding this, God would however have mercy on the sinner; and accept of some other life, as a ransom, in lieu of that forfeiture.

1st, I say, this institution, plainly taught, that sin was a forfeiture of life. For when it directed that a life should be paid down upon every transgression, what could be a clearer document from such an institution, than that life was the forfeit of transgression? Now if life be actually the forfeit of transgression, in every offender against God, 'tis evident that an institution, which carries that document with it, is, so far, well and wisely appointed: on every occasion,

occasion, that such a forfeiture happens to be made. And, that life is the forfeit of every offence against God, is evident, forasmuch as being must manifestly be bestowed, upon reasonable creatures, under condition, of obedience to their Maker: Nor is it imaginable how God could bestow it otherwise. And if being is bestowed on condition of obedience, 'tis evident that disobedience forfeits it. For, as God formed intelligent creatures, for the attainment of happiness in conformity to that excellent order of things, which he so admirably established for the well-being of the whole: 'twas a necessary consequence, from the wisdom of that establishment, that all voluntary deliberate departure from that order, should be a forfeiture of being. For otherwise, it would follow, that creatures had a right to continue in being, for reasons directly contrary to those, for which they were first formed; *i. e.* for reasons inconsistent with wisdom and goodness:—which is absurd:—but at the same time, that reasonable creatures, evidently forfeit their being, by disobedience, yet certainly God may, if he pleases, continue it to them, for the same reasons, for which he first conferred it; *i. e.* for the manifestation of his wisdom and goodness. And since he determined to continue it to man, after his offence, nothing could be more reasonable, than that he should continue it under some memorial of his own mercy, and man's demerit; for if
there

there were no memorial kept up of the heinousness of his offence, guilt would, from that moment, have no terror. And if guilt once lost its terror with men, corruption would quickly carry them on to endless enormity ; and then, man would continue in being, for ends directly contrary to those, for which he was preserved by the divine mercy, from the death which he had incurred : (which the wisdom and goodness of God could not allow :) And on the other hand, if there were no assurance of forgiveness, after transgression, the effect would be the very same ; for despair, would drive men, to the same extremes of transgression, to which impunity would tempt them.—And therefore, both the wisdom and the goodness of God, necessarily required such a memorial of mercy, on this occasion, as should at the same time strike sure terror into guilt : and what memorial could do this more effectually, than that, which demonstrated life to be the sure, fixed forfeit of every offence ? and since sacrifices are fitted to effect this, beyond any thing we know of, 'tis evident, that the wisdom and goodness of God are so far justified, in the institution of them, at this time.

IN the next place, *Adam* and *Eve* were now, not only naturally, but indecently, naked : 'Tis evident then in the first place, that decency required they should be covered ; and besides this, the inclemency of the air, added to the infirmity

infirmity of nature, which sin had introduced, had now made cloathing necessary : since otherwise their life must soon have become miserable ; or rather must soon be destroy'd, without some better protection than that of a few leaves. And since this exigence would likewise be fully answered by sacrifices, which would yield them covering, from the skins of the creatures so slain ; this also is a new evidence of the wisdom of God in this institution. Nor is there the least reason to doubt, that the cloaths made for our first parents, by divine appointment, immediately after the fall, were of the skins of the creatures offered up to God on this occasion ; for there is no reason to imagine, that any of the beasts, which were just made in perfection, should die so soon ; or would naturally die in many years after their creation. Nor was there any necessity that God should slay them for that sole end, when all the ends to be served by their death would be fully answered in the single institution of sacrifice : which I have now shewn, and will yet farther shew, to be in other respects wise and well-appointed, at that very time. To proceed then,

WE learn, from the command given, and the sentence denounced against *Adam*, that death was the penalty of his disobedience : and since it was so, certainly it was highly proper that he should know what he was to suffer ;

suffer; and consequently, that he should see death in all its horror and deformity; in order to judge rightly of the evil of disobedience (and in order to be better prepared to undergo it). And what could shew this evil, more strongly, than the groans and struggles of innocent creatures, bleeding to death for his guilt, before his eyes, and by his own hands? Sights of this kind, are shocking to humanity even yet; tho' custom hath long made them familiar; with what horror then may we imagine they pierced the hearts of our first Parents? and how was this horror aggravated, when they considered themselves, as the guilty authors of so much cruelty to the beings about them?

NOR is this all; — this institution was yet more extensive in its influence. For since early impressions of the danger and horror of guilt, are the best securities against sin; nothing surely could be better fitted, to fix these impressions deep in the minds of children, than the sad necessity of shedding blood, introduced by sin: which it was easy for a prudent parent, to inculcate, and impossible for a pious parent, not to inculcate, on every occasion of killing the creatures, in atonement for guilt. Especially when he himself felt all that horror of iniquity, which he would impress upon his children, on that occasion. And therefore this insti-

tution, was not only wise and necessary, with regard to *Adam* and *Eve*, but admirably contrived, to convey an early abhorrence of sin, into the minds of their offspring, from generation to generation.

ADD to all this, that *Adam* was to be yet farther informed of death: and to this purpose, when the groans and struggles of the dying animals were over, what ghastly and sad sights must the dead eyes, and cold carcasses of the creatures, yield him, before they were placed upon the altar; and in their ashes after? How dismal a meditation must it be, to consider the beauty and excellence of animate beings, reduced to a handful of dust? And what a shocking lecture of mortality, must the remains of those creatures read to our first parents, in their several gradations, from corruption to dust? especially, when they could not see them in that sad condition, but under the full assurance, that they themselves must follow the same odious steps to destruction.

AND is it possible to conceive how God could strike the human soul, with more sense of misery from guilt, or more abhorrence of the sad cause of that misery, than by this conduct? Such abhorrence of guilt, and such a loathing of life, that if the mercy of God had not caused some ray of
hope

hope to shine thro' this scene of mortality and misery, 'tis not to be imagined how *Adam* and *Eve* could bear their being; and therefore there seems to have been an absolute necessity, that when sacrifices pierced the heart of man, with such dread, and detestation of guilt, and misery, they should at the same time be seals to some covenant of mercy, from God.

THAT God entered into a covenant of mercy with man, immediately after the fall, is evident from the sentence passed upon the serpent: in which, a covenant of mercy is necessarily implied. And can we doubt that sacrifices were the seal of that covenant? especially when mercy is so plainly implied in the very nature of the institution; which teaches, that tho' life be the forfeit of sin, yet God will, in mercy, accept another life in lieu of the offender's.

AND since reason evinces the necessity of some covenant of mercy at this time, Can any man in his senses doubt the truth of those scriptures, which give us clearly to understand, that it was made? (How far the sacrifices then offered, were types of *Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, is the business of another enquiry). We find that God's usual way of ratifying covenants of mercy with man-

kind in after ages, was by sacrifices; And can we imagine, that he failed to do so, when such mercy was more wanted, than ever it was since the foundation of the world? and when such an establishment is demonstrably one main reason of the very institution of sacrifices? Is it to be imagined, that God should take care of the health of our parents bodies on this occasion, and take none of the peace of their minds? Is it to be imagined, that God, should soon after this, shew so much solicitude for an hardened murderer, for so vile a wretch as *Cain** and take none now, about two unhappy delinquents, oppressed with misery, and at the point of despair? Had he so much mercy, soon after, upon one man; and would he have none now upon the whole race of mankind, yet in *Adam*?

BUT here it may be objected, that when the flesh of animals was not eaten, their carcases were of no use; and so there was no detriment to mankind in slaying the creatures for sacrifices; at least, if they might preserve their skins for cloathing, &c.

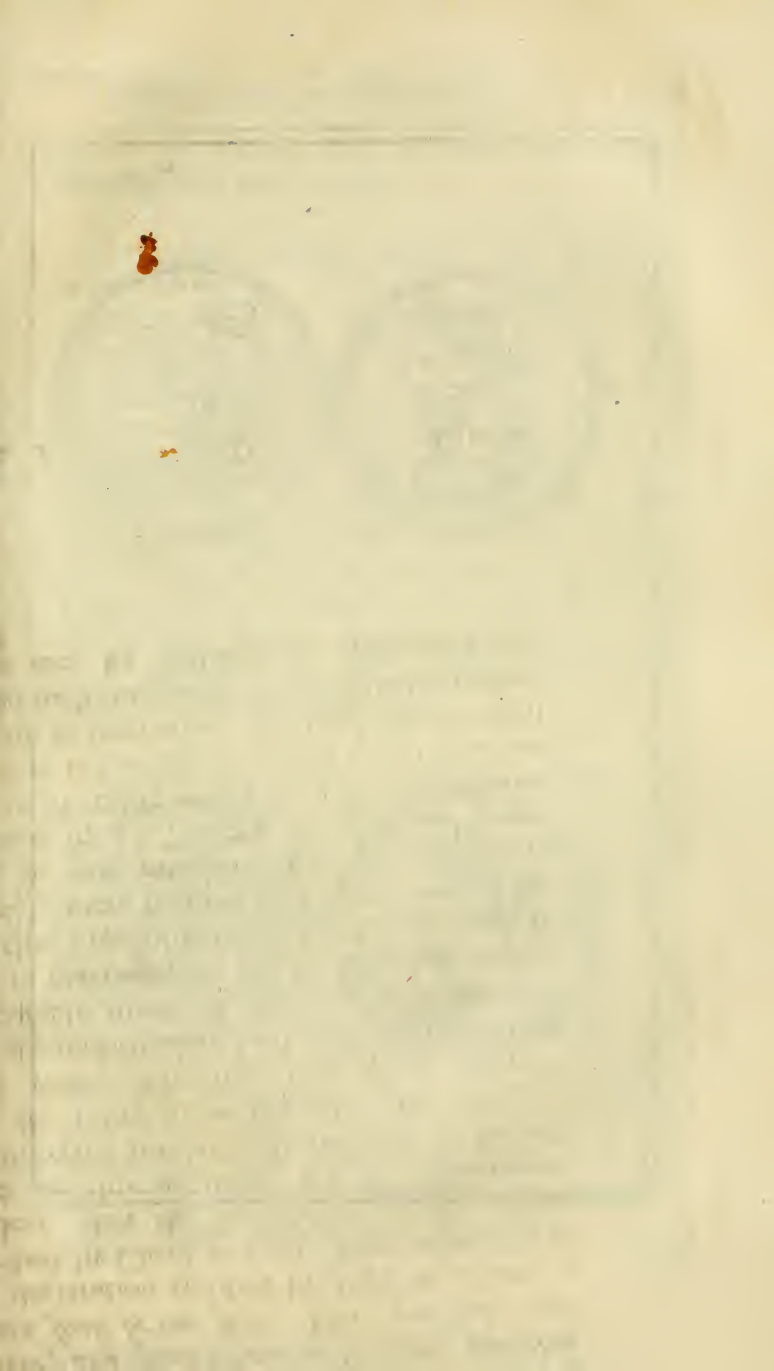
* For tho' it is said in a subsequent dissertation, that *Cain* was preserved in punishment, yet is it very consistent to suppose mercy mixed with all the divine chastisements in this world.

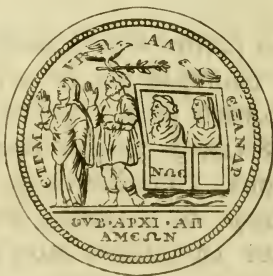
I ANSWER, That supposing the skin not destroyed in sacrifice, (as it certainly was in some cases under the law, and probably was so before), yet the destruction of the creatures was of manifold detriment; for as vestments of hair and wool, soon succeeded the ruder coverings of skins; the annual growths of all such creatures, as could be shorn, were of great emolument, even in the early ages of the world; especially to that part of mankind, which led the pastoral life, and dwelt in tents; and we find that *Abel's* sacrifice, was of creatures of this kind:—and, 'tis probable, that creatures of other kinds, were as useful in cases of carriage, as now, and more demanded; as the invention of more convenient vehicles hath now made a less number necessary for that purpose: nor is it improbable, that they were also of some use in tillage; especially, since that occupation began, as early as *Adam*:—many of them also might, for ought we know, be useful for food: for milk might be eaten, when flesh was not; — nay, their very carcases might be of as much use in culture, then, as now; they might also be the food of necessary domestick animals; or the food of creatures of carriage, as at this day among the *Arabs*.

AND this suggests another reason for the institution of sacrifices, *viz.* that sin should not go unpunished; but should always be attended with sensible inconveniency. And the damage men suffered, in the creatures destroyed in sacrifice for sin, was doubtless, at all times, a considerable inconveniency; especially after the flood. Nor let any man regard these damages as trifles, since they were such, in many cases, as wise legislatures have put in ballance with a human life.

THE only difficulty now remaining, is, whether a command to destroy the lives of innocent creatures, be consistent with the divine goodness and mercy.

BUT this will be no more a difficulty, when we consider that their subserviency to the ends of human life, is, as far as we can see, the sole end and purpose of their being; and that it is their happiness, upon the whole, to be submitted to the dominion of man, and to be destroyed for his uses; since they are by this means preserved from weather, from want, and from one another; and relieved under diseases and distresses of every kind: and forasmuch as only a certain number of them can subsist conveniently together, 'tis evidently their interest to be delivered





vered by sudden destructions, from more lingering and cruel deaths.

AND thus, having shewn, that sacrifices were of divine original; that faith only could make them acceptable to God; and that many ends of infinite wisdom and mercy were, at once, served by them: having also shewn, that there was an apparent necessity of God's making some covenant of mercy with *Adam* at this time; and that it is highly credible, he did so; I shall, with God's assistance, enquire in due time, how credible it may be, that the death of *Christ* was figured in that covenant; and was necessary to the redemption of the world, in consequence of it.

IN the mean time, I cannot, without indignation, reflect, upon the blind and insolent vanity, of those wretched mortals, who with such blasphemous and shocking temerity, set themselves to ridicule every institution of God, which the corruption, or narrowness, of their own heads and hearts, hath made them incapable of comprehending! Whereas, a very moderate degree of understanding, enlightened by a very moderate degree of learning and reflection, would naturally, and almost necessarily, teach them the adorable wisdom and goodness of every such institution: or, if it could

not, yet a very small portion of humility, might teach them, that every institution of God, must be wise and good; tho' possibly above the reach of poor short-sighted mortals. The least grain of humility could not but teach them, the infinite distance and disparity between their own little, narrow, groveling conceptions, and that infinite extent of knowledge, essential to *the high and mighty One, that inhabiteth eternity*: who hath assured us by the mouth of his holy prophet, that *his thoughts are not our thoughts, neither our ways his ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.*

To whom be glory for ever and ever.
Amen.





DISSERTATION IX.

Concerning that corruption and degeneracy of mankind, which drew down the divine judgment in a deluge.



IN the sixth chapter of *Genesis*, and the third verse, we find God speaking in this manner, concerning the corruption and depravity of mankind: *And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

THESE words contain the determination of the divine justice, upon God's inspection of that universal corruption which had overspread the earth, some time before the flood.

THE methods he had hitherto taken to deter man from guilt, and to draw him to good-

goodness, were now experienced to be ineffectual: (nor let any man quarrel with this way of speaking; since, 'tis evident, that the best methods of infinite wisdom, not controlling the liberty of free agents, may be defeated, or perverted, by degenerate beings, given up to the corruption of their own hearts, and the violence of unruly appetites): it remained then, that one method more should be taken for their amendment. *Noah, a preacher of righteousness*, is appointed to denounce the divine vengeance against their vileness, and to assure them, that the spirit of God would not always strive with them, in the gracious methods of mercy and monition; but would proceed to wrath and vengeance, if they did not forsake their wicked courses; and had now determined to allow them no more than a trial of one hundred and twenty years. In which time, if they did not amend, renounce their vileness, and return to their duty, they should be destroyed by an utter and final excision from the earth.— This is the common sense of commentators upon the place, and, the then state of things thoroughly considered, will, I believe, be found the most natural and proper interpretation of the words above recited.

As to the methods of mercy which God had taken for the amendment of mankind,

kind, before the flood was sent to destroy them, I shewed you in some former dissertations, that a *Seed* was promised immediately after the fall; who should subdue and destroy the power of that evil spirit, which had brought sin into the world: a victory which could neither be attained or enjoyed without enmity to evil, and attachment to good. This naturally tended to inspire all wise and good parents, with a strong zeal of training up their children, with the utmost exactness, in all the ways of religion and virtue; since all their hopes, both for themselves and their children, depended upon this rectitude of disposition; without which, it was impossible that any of them, could be the promised *seed*; who was to restore the human race, to their original purity and perfection.

I ALSO shewed you, that soon after this, sacrifices were instituted by Almighty God; as a means admirably fitted to inspire mankind with a horror of guilt; and be at the same time a perpetual memorial of the divine mercy, from generation to generation.

BESIDES this, *Adam* lived to teach and to exhort his children, nine hundred and thirty years; and *Lamech*, the father of *Noah*,
who

who died on the very year that God brought the flood upon the earth, was thirty years old when *Adam* died: and since we know from the scriptures, that *Lamech* was a prophet, there is no doubt but he also, as well as his son, was a *preacher of righteousness*, to mankind; till their sins drew down their destruction. And from this short account of that period, we may fairly collect, that the world never wanted either wise institutions, or authentick teachers from God, to keep them in their duty, or deter them from evil, from the creation to the flood.

ADD to all this, that there is good reason to believe, that God exhibited himself to mankind, at that season, by some signal manifestation of his presence; as afterwards in the tabernacle, and temple. — This seems sufficiently implied in *Cain's* complaint, of being driven from the divine presence, upon the murder of *Abel*: for we cannot, with any shew of reason, believe him ignorant, that God was essentially present every where. And therefore, when he says, *Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid*; 'tis evident, that as by the *earth*, he only meant that particular region of the earth where *Adam* then dwelt; so, by the words *thy face*, he must only mean that peculiar, gracious exhibition of his divine pre-

presence, which he there vouchsafed to mankind,

AND this very banishment, with that mark wherewith God had branded him as a murderer, was a signal monition to the whole race of *Adam*, that vengeance from God should pursue sin. And as he was banished from that region where his father dwelt, 'twas a necessary consequence of his exile, that he carried the same monition to his own posterity; and preserved it, in whatever region of the earth he settled after this time; *i. e.* he carried it to that region, where it is certain, it must have been most wanted, as being most remote from the authority and influence of *Adam*. And as *Cain's* punishment, was, at this time, a signal deterrent from vice, so *Enoch's* exaltation to heaven, afterwards, (which from the reason of the thing and character of the man, doubtless was done in a very glorious and conspicuous manner), was the noblest exhortation to piety and virtue, that can be imagined. And, at the same time, a sure document to the world, that God had ample rewards in heaven for the righteous, *such as eye had not seen, nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man to conceive.*

THUS much is obvious to be inferred, from the account left us in scripture, of the methods of mercy and monition made use of by the

w
divine

divine wisdom and goodness, for the amendment of mankind, before the earth was overwhelmed with a deluge: but as that account is very short, 'tis possible there might have been many other methods made use of to the same purpose, and probably there were; tho' 'tis certain, that even those recorded in the scriptures, are abundantly sufficient to vindicate *the ways of God with man*, during that period.

BUT when all these gracious methods, monitions, and exhortations, (whatever they were) were in the end found ineffectual, for the amendment of the world: I believe it will not be denied, that there was then a necessity of a new revelation, (in the usual course of God's dealing with the sons of men) antecedent to the utter destruction of this degenerate race: both to manifest his mercy, and to vindicate his justice, in the government of the world; to make it sufficiently evident to all succeeding generations, that no means were left unessay'd for their amendment; and that nothing, but the last necessity, compelled their Maker, to proceed to extremities with his creatures.—Whereas then, *Moses* represents mankind, as in the last degree of degeneracy, before they were destroyed by the flood, and at the same time, represents Almighty God, declaring *that his spirit should not always contend with them*, but that however he would yet bear with them, for an hundred and twenty years; nothing

nothing surely can be more reasonable, than to conclude from this account, that God gave them certain notice of his fixed intention to destroy them, at the end of this period, if their amendment did not avert the judgment. And that he did so, is sufficiently implied in that passage in *St. Peter's Epistle*, where *Noah* is stiled *a preacher of righteousness*; added to the subsequent incidental observation, that the people of that period of time were disobedient, *when the long suffering of God waited while the Ark was preparing*: this being considered, I think we can have no reason to doubt, that *Noah* was a preacher inspired by the spirit of God, to warn the old world, of the divine vengeance hanging over their heads, at that time.

HAVING thus explained the full scope and intention of the divine declaration mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, I now proceed to enquire,

1st, By what means human nature became so corrupt, in so small a space; *i. e.* in a succession of so few generations as passed from the creation to the flood? corrupt to such a degree as to lay God under a necessity of destroying them.

2^{dly}, To enquire by what means that calamity was brought upon the earth. And,

W

3^{dly}, WHAT

3dly, WHAT end of the divine wisdom and goodness were answered by it.

1st, THEN, I am to enquire how it was possible for mankind to become so utterly corrupt, in a succession of so few generations, as passed from the creation to the flood.

AND here I must own, that it is indeed scarcely imaginable, at first sight, how man cou'd be so corrupt, under all the restraints from evil, and incitements to good, which God made use of to keep him within the bounds of duty, during that period. And yet the influence of the first transgression, will, upon due reflection, but too well account for all this enormity.

As man is a being, made up of body and spirit, the one, passive and senseless, the other, active and intelligent: 'tis evident the perfection of his nature, must consist in the subjection of the body, to the dominion of the spirit: *i. e.* in a subordination of his organs and appetites to the dictates of right reason. It follows then, that, if, by any misfortune, the powers of his understanding should be impaired, or those of his appetites inflam'd, he must from that moment become an irregular, imperfect creature; inasmuch as the balance must immediately turn in favour of the inferior appetites; which would often influence him to act in opposition

tion to reason. And that either, or both these effects might be produced by eating the forbidden fruit, I have already shewn.

AND as the indulgence of the appetites naturally tends to weaken the intellectual faculties, by taking off the mind from intellectual objects, and immersing it in matter, and sensual pursuits; it seems a necessary consequence from this condition, that man, left to his own liberty, or unrestrained by some very extraordinary degrees of divine grace, must naturally degenerate into the last degree of corruption.

AND what restraint, consistent with human freedom, can be imagined sufficient to check his unruly appetites, in that height of vigour, and confidence of long life? If all the dictates of reason, and terrors of religion, are unable to withhold men from blasphemy, and violence, and villainy, even now, under all the discouragements of a short and wretched life, rarely, and with great difficulty stretched out to a span of seventy years; what can we conceive sufficient to keep them back, in the strength and security of sin, for a continued series of eight or nine hundred years? No interposition of providence can be imagined sufficient for their amendment in these circumstances: unless it were such, as would either change their nature, or destroy their freedom; and therefore 'tis

VOL. I. M but

but too credible, that in about 1500 years from the creation, God found them degenerate to such a degree, as if they had been mere brute beasts; for that seems the most natural sense of the text;—*My spirit shall not always strive with man; for that he also is FLESH, i. e.* 'Tis in vain to use any more methods of mercy, or monitions of wisdom with man, who is now entirely given up to fleshly appetites; and is by that means sunk down into the lowest condition of brutality:—And soon after, *Moses* assures us, that *God saw that the wickedness of man, was great in the earth; and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually.* And this also is easily apprehended. For as the vanquished, naturally become slaves to the conqueror, so here, all the powers of the mind, being subdued to the dominion of the appetites, served now to no other purpose, than to purvey for the pleasure of their tyrants; and minister to all their unruly demands.

THIS extreme degeneracy, made it necessary to Almighty God, to root out the whole race of mankind from the earth, except one man and his family: which family, being yet but young, were preserved from that degeneracy, by the example and influence of a righteous parent: for we are assured, *that Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations; and Noah walked with God, Gen. vi. 9.*

Now

NOW this destruction of the human race was, at once, an act of the highest justice and mercy. For, since God made man for ends worthy of his own infinite wisdom and goodness; and since, by their disobedience and degeneracy, they had utterly defeated the ends of their creation; lived only to purposes directly contrary to those ends, and wholly destructive of them; lived only to rebellion and disobedience to their Maker, and their own mutual misery and destruction; nothing could better beseem the mercy and the justice of God, than to cut off that corruption by an utter excision, which neither his restraints, nor rewards, nor all the monitions and exhortations of his prophets, added to his own declarations, institutions, inflictions, and denunciations of vengeance, could reclaim, in the course of so many centuries.

By what gradations men arrived to this height of corruption, is not so clear from the scriptures; yet may, with much appearance of truth, be collected from them;—For besides the general expressions in which *Moses* describes this degeneracy, there are two that seem to point out particular vices; both mentioned in *Gen. vi. 11.* *The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence*;—by *violence* is plainly meant cruelty, and outrage, and injustice of every kind:

and by *corruption*, the *Jews* tell us, is always meant either idolatry, or abominable and unlawful mixtures and pollutions. And that the latter is here meant, is evident from this subsequent explication of those words: *for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth*. The question then is, by what means both these corruptions came into the world? Now,

THE first instance of iniquity we meet with after *Cain*, is in *Lamech*, the sixth in descent from him, inclusive. He introduced the corruption of polygamy into the world; which could not fail to introduce many others; such as murder, adultery, and unnatural lust: As is easy to be conceived, and shall be shewn more at large hereafter. And it is highly probable that he made his way to that crime by the murder of the husband or spouse of one of his wives. This is not unnaturally collected from the very nature of his crime, added to that bitter exclamation of his to his wives, in *Gen. v. Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt*:—From hence 'tis evident, that he had committed murder (one murder at least, if not more) and what cause so probable for his doing so, as the gratification of his lust: especially in an age of the world when there seems to be little occasion of contention for any property, but that of women:
The

The earth not being yet peopled, and the creatures doubtless in great plenty ; — And why should he call so emphatically to his wives, and complain to them under that particular character, unless they had, in that particular character, been some way or other the occasion of that crying guilt ? and how they, as wives, could be the occasion of that guilt, without any guilt of their own, (which they are not charged with) is not easy to be imagined upon any other supposition.

AND this conjecture is strengthened by reflecting, that there was an apparent necessity that mankind should at first be propagated in a regular succession of male and female, at least in equal numbers of each sex : and in that case, no man could pretend to a plurality of wives but by doing a manifest injury to some other : nor is it likely, that other would submit to such an injury without force. That *Lamech* had used force against some other man is evident ; as also that he thought himself much more criminal in doing so, even than *Cain* : as appears from that exclamation (which I think, hath not yet been rightly understood) *If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold* ; — Now the true reason why God marked *Cain*, and guarded him from destruction, under so severe a penalty upon any one that should slay him, was demonstrably this ; that he might preserve him

as a living monument of the curse of God upon murder.

FOR God himself assures us, that his brother's blood *cry'd up from the earth*, for vengeance upon him: and accordingly we find that he was branded, he was banished, he was emphatically curst by God; and every portion of ground, he attempted to till, was peculiarly curst for his sake. And can we after this imagine, that life was left him for any other reason, than another curse? And *Cain* himself was sufficiently sensible that it was left him for no other reason: this appears from that bitter lamentation of his, *My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me, shall slay me; —* To this complaint God makes this reply, — *Therefore (or as it is better rendered for that reason) whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold; i. e.* For that very reason, because your punishment is greater than you can bear, because you shall be an exile, a fugitive and a vagabond — a signal example of divine vengeance upon guilt — for these very reasons, I will preserve you, and set a mark upon you, that no man shall dare to slay you — Now, on supposition that this was the reason of God's pre-

preserving *Cain*, (and surely it will be hard to find any other reason inconsistent with this, why that murderer was so signally protected;) I say, upon supposition that this was the reason, and that *Lamech* knew it (as he could not but know it) his exclamation to his wives is plainly a confession, that he had been guilty of a much greater crime than *Cain*: that he had murdered from a much less pardonable motive, than preference in the favour of God (which was the case of *Cain*) and therefore concluded that God might justly render him a much more dreadful monument of his wrath, than he had rendered *Cain*; — And in this terror, that bitter exclamation falls from him, *If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold.*

THE character of *Lamech's* family makes this account yet more credible: One of his sons being the inventor of musical instruments, and the other an *instructor of every artificer in brass and iron*; or (as it is in the hebrew) *a whetter of every work of brass and iron*, i.e. in the most rational interpretation of the words, an artificer of weapons of war. For the common instruments for tillage and building were invented long before — *Cain* had built a city before this; and 'tis scarcely imaginable how this could be done without some knowledge and use of metals---From hence 'tis reasonable to believe, that as one of *Lamech's* sons invent-

ed instruments of luxury, so the other invented instruments of violence. And this is further confirmed from the character of *Vulcan* with the heathen, who was certainly no other than this very *Tubal Cain*: and from the best accounts antiquity affords, in relation to this man's character, we have reason to conclude, that his business was, to forge instruments of violence and war.

AND as luxury naturally begets a disposition to injure others in their property ; and such a disposition, armed with offensive weapons, naturally tends to beget all kinds of insolence and outrage to our fellow creatures : all these considerations make it highly probable, that as *Lamech* had gratified his lust (in polygamy) by force and violence ; his example, in a race so armed, and at the same time remarkable for gigantick stature and strength, (as we are assured many of the ante-diluvians, and probably of that race, were) might naturally enough introduce all that train of corruption, which drew God's judgments upon the earth.

AND indeed this seems sufficiently evident from *Moses's* account of the matter : for immediately before he mentions the last degeneracy of mankind, he tells us, *that the sons of God, i. e. the descendents of Seth*, (who called themselves by that name, in contradistinction to those of *Cain*, who, probably,
in

in the height of their impiety, disclaimed the divine original of man) *saw the daughters of men, and took them wives of all which they chose.* — The plain sense of which words, is this; that every man took to himself as many wives out of them as he liked: making his liking, the only limit and measure of the number. And when the righteous race of *Seth*, fell into this vice of polygamy, then followed an universal depravity. And accordingly, as soon as *Moses* hath related this misconduct of the sons of *Seth*, he immediately adds, *And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man*; i. e. that it was in vain to oppose any more methods of mercy to this torrent of impiety; for the earth was then thoroughly corrupt, and filled with violence.

AND as this is a natural account of this progress of evil, so it is probable, this outcry of *Lamech's* was occasioned by observing all that terrible train of iniquity, which his example had introduced into the world. For *Moses* relates nothing of his lamentation, till after he hath told us of the birth of his sons by both his wives; and the inventions of both those sons: and therefore, 'tis highly probable, he never saw his guilt in a true light, till he saw the dreadful effects of it in his posterity, in his own posterity at least, if not in that of *Seth's* also. And this
might

might naturally enough make him lament his guilt to his wives ; and in that lamentation, own, that he deserved vastly more punishment on that score, from the hand of God, than even *Cain* himself.

AND thus, having shewn you how it was possible, and by what gradations it is probable, that iniquity increased to so monstrous an height in the world, as to lay the divine justice and goodness under a necessity of destroying the human race by a flood : I now proceed to enquire, by what means that calamity was brought upon the earth.





DISSERTATION X.

Concerning the natural causes made use of by Almighty God to flood the earth.



AND here I must own, that such an enquiry is matter of much more curiosity, than use; since this work was evidently miraculous. And they, who have attempted to account for it any other way, are found to have departed just so far from philosophy and truth, as they departed from revelation. And therefore, omitting the several imaginations of men upon this head, I shall just trace that account of the matter, which is naturally and obviously deducible from the scripture; and is as follows:

MOSES tells us in the first chapter of *Genesis*, that when God created the earth,
darkness

darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. For hence 'tis evident, that the face of the *deep*, is the face of the *waters*; and consequently, that the earth was covered with water, immediately after the creation: nay more, that these waters covered the face of the earth to a considerable depth, in the same manner that the sea now covers some portions of it. For we find, that the waters, which now covered the earth, are called the *deep*, which is the known expression, by which the most profound part of the sea is signified, in scripture; (as you may read in the fifty-first chapter of *Isaiab* at the tenth verse) and could with no propriety be used in this place, on this occasion, if the waters had not at this time covered the earth to a considerable depth. — And this reasoning is fully confirmed from the 104th *Psalms*, where *David*, describing the power and wisdom of God in the creation of the earth, makes use of this magnificent image; *Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.*

AFTER this, in the order of the creation, followed the division of light from darkness; — and after this, the distribution of that water which was upon the earth, into two distinct regions; according to these words of
Moses.

Moses. — And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters, which were under the firmament, from the waters, which were above the firmament : and it was so : And God called the firmament, heaven : and the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear : and it was so ; — and God called the dry land earth ; and the gathering together of the waters called he, seas ; and God saw that it was good. — And this operation also of the divine power, by which the waters were collected into one place, is nobly described by David in the forementioned Psalm : — At thy rebuke they fled ; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away ; — they go up by the mountains ; they go down by the valleys ; unto the place which thou hast founded for them ; — thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over : that they turn not again to cover the earth.

FROM this description, a learned * commentator concludes, that when God had separated so much water from the earth as

* Dr. Patrick.

he thought proper, by the interposition of the firmament; he prepared a receptacle for what remained, by breaking up a proper portion of the earth, with the violence of an earthquake, caused by the inflammation of nitro-fulphureous matter pent up in it for that very purpose. And as the waters would, in that case, be first thrown up to an immense height, and then rush down impetuous into their hold, we may conceive an image of this scene, from that beautiful description of the *Psalmist*: *At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away, — they go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys: —* or rather, (as it is expressed with infinitely more beauty and magnificence in the original), *they ascend the mountains, they descend the valleys*: words which most admirably express the speed and impetuosity of their motion, both in their projection and fall. And that something like this was the real case, seems not improbable from that exalted passage in the 38th chapter of *Job*, where God, questioning that righteous man concerning the works of infinite wisdom and magnificence, manifested in the creation, asks him, *Who shut up the sea with doors: when it brake forth, as it had issued out of the womb. — When I made the cloud the garment thereof; and thick darkness a swathing-band for it, — and brake up for it my decreed place?*

AND as this is the account the scriptures give us of the original expansion, division, and distribution of the waters at the creation; nothing is more intelligible, nothing is more obvious to the meanest capacity, than how God could deluge the world whenever he pleased. Since nothing more was requisite to effect this, than letting down those waters which he first lifted up; and closing up those vast hollows of the earth, (in order to throw up the water uniformly upon its surface) into which he first tore the earth, in order to receive the water from the same surface: or, (as *Moses* expresses it) *to let the dry land appear*.

ANY man, that casts his eye upon a common map of the world, will see that more than two thirds of the globe are already covered with sea, to a considerable depth. And if we add to these, that part of its surface, which is over-spread with fresh-water, lakes and rivers, we shall scarce find one quarter part of the earth dry, at this day. And there is reason to believe that the depth of the sea is, in many places, prodigious, — perhaps exceeding the height of the highest mountains. Now the bare closing of some of these vast hollows, would throw up such mountains of water, upon the earth, as were sufficient to deluge a considerable part of it: Add to this, that many
rivers

rivers now run under the earth; and that vast subterraneous caverns are now found in several parts of it, filled with water, which, if thrown upon the surface, would doubtless add immensly to the floods that already cover it.

AND besides all this, it is not improbable, that there may be, even, yet a vast abyfs of waters shut up within this outward shell of the earth, sufficient to deluge it, whenever Almighty God should think fit to break open the shell that surrounds them, and force them up upon the surface: That there was such a store originally deposited in it, is clearly and indubitably collected from several passages of sacred writ. Thus in the eighth chapter of the *Proverbs*, wisdom is introduced speaking of God's creation in the following manner; *When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: — when he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep*, i. e. (in the most natural sense of the words) when he fenced in the fountains of the deep, with a solid arch of earth.

So likewise in the 24th *Psalms*, at the 2d verse, *David* says of the earth, that God *founded it upon the seas; and established it upon the floods*. And again, at the 136th *Psalms*,

Psalm, when he exhorts to give thanks to the Lord, he adds at the sixth verse, *To him that stretched out the earth above the waters.*

Now *Moses* ascribes the deluge to two causes : he tells us, *that the fountains of the great deep were broken up*; and that *the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights*. What stores of water God might have originally reserved in the earth for this very purpose, is impossible to say. That he did make such a reserve, is sufficiently evident from these words of *Moses*. * And tho' the same quantity should not now remain, we should remember that *St. Peter* assures us, that the state of the earth, at present, is very different from what it was at first. His words are these : *By the word of God the Heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water*. Now the Greek expression, which is here rendered, *standing out of the water*, may also be rendered, *made up of water*, i. e. having a vast quantity of water in its bowels; and either interpretation brings us to the same conclu-

* That the quantity preserved might be sufficient for the deluge, is manifest.

Sir *Walter Raleigh* supposes the highest mountains 30 miles high, and the diameter of the earth about 7000 miles, and the semi-diameter 3500; and then observes that 30 is found in the depths of the earth 116 times. L. 1. c. 7. Sect. 6.

sion: For if the earth was founded upon the waters, (as the *Psalmist* assures us it was) then the apostle's expression is true in either sense; for then it might properly be said to *stand out of the water, and in the water*; and as properly, to *consist, in a great measure, of water*.

AND an earth so constituted, being, at the same time, encompassed by a vast flood of waters, supported by the atmosphere, was easily flooded, at the pleasure of God.

BUT here it may be asked, How this atmosphere, which surrounds the earth, could support so vast a quantity of vapours, as were sufficient for forty Days incessant rain over the face of the whole earth?

I ANSWER, That tho' the present atmosphere extends but a small way, nothing is more intelligible, upon the known principles of philosophy, than that God could, even according to the present establishment of nature, (tho' we are by no means to be determined in our reasonings upon this head, by the present state of things in relation to this earth, which *St. Peter* assures us is very different from its original condition) dispose an immense quantity of vapours, in that vast expanse which surrounds the earth, by rarefying them to what degree, and consequently,

ly, expanding them to what extent, he thought proper ; especially if the moon and stars conspire to these operations, as well as the sun, as learned men think they do *.—Nay, the learned theorist, who ascribes this immense rain to the atmosphere of a comet, (which, I own, is by much the most probable of all extraordinary natural means) by admitting, that it actually did rain forty days and forty nights, must admit that the expanse, surrounding the earth, could support a quantity of vapours sufficient for that rain : otherwise those vapours must have fallen down at once, and not by a gradual descent for forty days and nights.

BUT supposing the atmosphere could not, in its ordinary state, support a quantity of vapours sufficient for forty days incessant rain, upon the wicked world at that time ; surely it was easy for God to add what quantity he thought fit, from the other elements ; which we know are transmutable into one another. Every naturalist knows, that water rarefied is air ; and 'tis as evident, that air, condensed to a certain degree, may be water : that water, at present, either constitutes a great part of the air we breathe, or, at least, is, to a

* Vid. Varenii geograph. cap. 19. prop. 3. & 4. p. 222, 223.

great degree, mixt with it, is known beyond all doubt. And why the whole body of it, except what was necessary for the few surviving animals, might not be either condensed, or transmuted into that element on this occasion, is not easy to say: nor to how immense a quantity the whole expanse of air and æther so transmuted would amount. And 'tis evident, that the very earth, washed off by the rains on this occasion, (and there is reason to believe, that the upper strata were washed off to a considerable depth) might add immensely to the fluid mass, even supposing it not transmuted into water; and I see no reason why it was not transmuted, unless it were, that such a transmutation was not necessary to the purposes of providence at that time: for otherwise, since the whole conduct of God was very extraordinary in relation to this affair; why might it not have been so in this respect, as well as in every other? His suspending all that water (or, at least the greatest part of it) which he originally divided from the earth by the firmament, for 1656 years together, was doubtless what we call miraculous. And his letting it all down at any time afterwards, for forty days and nights together, after it was so taken up, was evidently no less miraculous.

'Tis

'Tis vain therefore, to trouble ourselves in searching what means Almighty God made use of to produce this effect; whether by the access and atmosphere of a comet; or by a transmutation of some other elements into water on that occasion; or barely letting down those waters he first lifted up from the earth, and forcing up those fountains he first deposited in it; — which seems to be the plain truth of the case, whatever change may since have been wrought, either in the earth or firmament.

IT must indeed be for ever owned, with the utmost gratitude, by all candid enquirers after truth, that to enquire what means God made use of on this occasion, in order to vindicate so noble a part of the *Mosaic* history, and the dispensations of providence in the government of the world, and to silence the objections of importunate cavillers on this head, is the work of a most commendable and noble curiosity: otherwise, what avails it to any human creature of common humility, to know what means God made use of on this occasion, when so many means were equally in his choice? and when all means were equally sufficient for it, in the hands of omnipotence?

AND therefore I hasten to that which is more our concern to know, and to demonstrate to the confusion of infidelity ; and that is, what ends of divine wisdom were answer'd by this signal destruction of the old world.





DISSERTATION XI.

*Concerning the ends of divine wisdom
answered by the Deluge.*



HAVING, in the precedent dissertation, shewn you, what methods of mercy and wisdom it pleased God to make use of, to keep mankind in a course of duty, and to deter them from disobedience, before the flood; and that, upon the failure of all those methods, there was an apparent necessity of a new revelation at that time, antecedent to the destruction of that degenerate race, in order to vindicate the justice, and the goodness of God in the government of the world; ——— to let all succeeding generations see, that no means were left un-essay'd for their amendment; and that nothing, but the last necessity, compelled their Maker to proceed to extremities with his
N 4 creatures;

creatures : Having likewise shewn you how it was possible, and by what means it was probable, that mankind became so exceedingly corrupt before the flood ; and also by what means that calamity might be brought upon the earth : I now proceed to enquire, what ends of the divine wisdom and goodness were answered by it.

AND one end of divine wisdom plainly answered by it, is this, the establishment of one universal, incontestable, perpetual monument of his power and providence in the punishment of guilt, over the face of the whole earth.

ALL the other methods of providence, however, in themselves, wise and wonderful, are yet, thro' the perverseness and vanity of human nature, some way or other objects of doubt, and dispute, at least, if not of direct denial, and downright ridicule, with that spirit of infidelity which is gone out into the world ; but the deluge is out of the reach of all possible exception ; and forces that evil spirit to be as *dumb*, on this occasion, as it is *deaf* and *loud* upon others.

IF we vindicate the goodness of God, in laying no more than one easy restraint upon our first parents, in paradise, we are immediately asked, Why God did not rather lay

moral

moral restraints upon them? When we shew that there was no need of *moral* restraints in that state of things; we then are asked, Why any restraints? *i. e.* in truth, Why God did not make his creatures independent of himself? or, Why he did not make them all as perfect as himself?

IF we tell them of God's teaching us our duty by the plainest precepts and prohibitions, they insist, that words are easily mistaken, but the true way of teaching, is from the nature of things. If we urge, that teaching by *types* and *symbols*, is teaching from the nature of things, they immediately cry out for plain precepts that can't be mistaken.

IF we vindicate the reasonableness of *positive* institutions, from a Being of infinite wisdom, to beings of a very limited capacity, they immediately call out for *rational* precepts. If religion is recommended for its rational precepts, they say, rational precepts sufficiently recommend themselves. We no sooner shew the excellence of the religion of *Christ*, but they cry up the religion of *nature*. If we tell them, that the religion of *Christ*, has perfected the religion of nature; they answer, That reason and nature were sufficient without that religion. If we urge, that reason is not sufficient, and that the
good-

goodness of God exacted some revelation for the restraint and guidance of his creatures, they tell us, that the goodness of God made it necessary that his creatures should be so perfect as to be their own guides. If we answer, That *God made man perfect in the beginning*, but that he himself forfeited that felicity; they laugh, with the scoffers mentioned by the apostle, and tell us, that *all things are now as they were from the beginning*.

HERE then we join issue with them; and tell them, that there was a time, when God signally interposed in the punishment of a corrupt world, by an universal deluge of waters; and that only one man and his family were providentially rescued from that punishment; and that the oldest histories and antiquities of all nations under heaven, agree in the truth of this fact.

THEY answer, That all antiquity is fabulous; that there might, indeed, have been particular deluges, by some accident, in particular places; and that the people of those places might imagine that all the rest of the world was drowned except some few, that escaped among themselves; and so the tradition might become universal: but that a deluge was so, is utterly incredible and impossible.

HERE

HERE then we call in natural philosophy, and astronomy to our aid. The first of these teaches us, that tho' this atmosphere extends but a small way, yet, 'tis impossible to say, what quantity of vapours may be suspended in this vast expanse which surrounds the earth, possibly a quantity sufficient for more than forty days incessant rain over the face of the whole earth: at least, it might have been so, in the original constitution of things, in relation to this nether world, tho' possibly the state of things may now be very different, from their original constitution. That there are also many subterraneous rivers and receptacles of water in the earth, which, with the floods forced up by closing some great hollows in the depths of the ocean, would throw an inconceivable quantity of water upon that part of the earth, which is now dry. And that there are unanswerable reasons to believe, that besides all these supplies, there is a vast fund of waters shut up in the very bowels of the earth, to be thrown up upon the surface of it, at the pleasure of its Maker; at least, *St. Peter* assures us, this was the original state of the earth; and if it pleased God to break the outward shell of the earth, and force out the fluid contained in it, by the interposition of natural causes, rather than by some immediate act of power, astro-

nomy

nomny demonstrates the possibility of doing so, by the access of a comet ; which, by the force of attraction, might alter the figure of the earth, from spherical to oval ; and by that means, force out the fluid within it, at a great variety of fissures, which would necessarily be formed on this occasion. That, if all this were not enough to drown this ball, an inconsiderable portion of the atmosphere of the same comet, would be demonstrably sufficient to answer the *Mosaic* account of the deluge.

HERE then are history, antiquity, natural philosophy, and astronomy full on the side of revelation. What subterfuge now for infidelity ? Why still it may be urged, that supposing the difficulties, as to the possibility of these effects, to be over, yet possibility and probability join'd together, do not infer reality and certainty.

HERE then we appeal once more to nature ; and find that, in fact, there are, at this day, as evident, as demonstrative, as incontestable proofs of the deluge, over the face of the whole earth, at the distance of about four thousand years, as if it had happened but last year. And whereas *Moses* assures us, that the *waters prevailed fifteen cubits above the tops of the highest mountains*, let the mountains themselves be appealed to
for

for the truth of this assertion: Examine the highest eminences of the earth, and they all, with one accord, produce the spoils of the ocean deposited upon them on that occasion; the shells and skeletons of sea-fish, and sea-monsters of all kinds. The *Alps*, the *Apennine*, the *Pyrenees*, *Libanus*, and *Atlas*, and *Ararat*, every mountain of every region under heaven (where search hath been made) from *Japan* to *Mexico*, all conspire in one uniform, universal proof, that they all had the sea spread over their highest summits. Search the earth; you shall find the mouse-deer, natives of *America*, buried in *Ireland*; elephants, natives of *Asia* and *Africa*, buried in the midst of *England*; crocodiles, natives of the *Nile*, in the heart of *Germany*; shell-fish, never known in any but the *American* seas, together with entire skeletons of whales, in the most inland regions of *England*; trees of vast dimensions, with their roots and tops, and some also with leaves and fruit, at the bottoms of mines and marls; and that too, in regions where no tree of that kind was ever known to grow; nay, where it is demonstrably impossible they could grow. Nay more, trees and plants of various kinds, which are not known to grow in any region under heaven *.

* See *Woodward's* natural history of the earth enlarged, and the defence of it. *Bochart*, &c.

IF you ask how all this could be? How shells could float in the water, so as to reach, and to rest on the tops of mountains; or how, both they and other creatures should sink so deep into the earth, as to be found at the bottom of mines and quarries? I answer, that all these events perfectly demonstrate *Moses's* account of this matter to be incontestably true; since all these events could plainly come to pass, according to his account of the matter, but are utterly impossible, and unimaginable, upon any other principles. We now see shells of all kinds, constantly thrown upon the shoar, by the working of the sea; and therefore, when all parts of the earth became shoars by the gradual swelling of the waters, 'tis obvious, that they all must have sea-shells successively thrown upon them: and forasmuch as, in all probability, no fish were destroyed for food before the flood, 'tis evident, that shell-fish, as all others, must have been in prodigious quantities in the sea at that time; as their being found to have been in prodigious quantities at that time, is also a very good proof that they were not destroyed for food before that time.

BESIDES this, *Moses* tells us, that *the fountains of the great deep were broken up* on that occasion. Now the rushing up of the waters

ters

ters thro' these fountains, must, of necessity, cause so prodigious a commotion in the sea, as would throw up the heaviest bodies from the bottom of the ocean ; and this working of that huge flood, added to the incessant agitation of the rains and tides for so many days together, were sufficient to throw bodies of almost any weight, and much more such light bodies as shells, upon the tops of the highest mountains. And if those appearances they call *spouts*, are now found sufficient to force up waters above the clouds, and, by means of that force, *to throw up* stones, and tear up anchors by some astonishing power, with how much more force must that water act and agitate, which is thrown up by the pressure of the earth ? And as the breaking up of these fountains of the deep, is abundantly sufficient to account for any effect of the deluge, now observable upon the greatest heights of the earth, so the return of the waters into the bowels of the earth, thro' the same channels, when God shut up the fountains of the deep, must of necessity, carry bodies of all kinds back with them again, into the bowels of the earth.

ADD to this, that all that mass of earth, and stones, and shells, and trees, and animals, which floated together in that immense body of waters, for so many days, must of

necessity, in their subsiding, fill up a vast many hollows left in the earth, from the beginning; and a vast many more made in it, by the fall, the motion and eruption of the waters, in infinite places. And that earthquakes also, must, in many places, have sunk these bodies at sundry times, much deeper into the bowels of the earth; and by that means, preserved them much safer, than they otherwise would have been.

AND thus it comes to pass, that the heights and depths of the earth, equally and incontestably confess the mighty power and signal interposition of God, in the destruction of the old world, by a deluge of waters, *for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein. Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and cedars, beasts and all cattel, nay, fire and vapours, wind and storm, (conspiring to prove the) fulfilling his word.* And thus it comes to pass, that we may, with some small variation, say, of Almighty God, from these universal effects, this ubiquity of his power, in the deluge, as *David* does, on another occasion, of the ubiquity of his presence, *If I climb up towards heaven, thou art there; if I go down towards hell, thou art there also.*

AND here I must again put a plain question, to the patrons of infidelity. Do
they

they know, that this universal attestation of the whole earth to the truth of the *Mosaic* history, is an amazing and incontestable proof, that that history is verified even in that part of it, which of all others, is the most surprizing ? If they do know this, Why do they not believe it ? Do they know it to be demonstrably true, and will they yet revile it, as if it were demonstrably false ? Is it possible there can be such monsters among the sons of men ? And on the other hand, if they do not know it, will they dare to insult our faith, from the force of downright stupidity and ignorance ? Is this to be endured ? We produce plain proof, demonstrative, incontestable evidence, and they confute us with a loud irrefragable laugh, or a gentle, commiserating smile : We urge reason, and they retort ridicule, and so go off in triumph.

MOSES had passed his life in *Egypt*, and its confines, and it was impossible for him, by any natural means, to know the state of things in all the other regions of the earth. These islands were not then, in all probability, known to the rest of the world ; nor were *China* and *America* so much as dreamt of. How then could *Moses* take upon him to say in so peremptory a manner, that the waters of the deluge prevailed over all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven ;

O

and

and that the mountains were covered; unless he either knew this from the unerring spirit of God, or was informed of it from some sure unerring tradition? Now suppose it to be barely from tradition, if that tradition is found to be unerring in that part, which is at once the most amazing, and the most exceptionable of all others, Can we consistently, with any degree of common sense, discredit or disclaim it in any other part? especially, when it is found, upon a due enquiry, that there is a plain foundation for a clear, unquestionable tradition in this case, from the few generations which had passed between *Noah* and *Moses*: and when all the parts of that tradition, are found, after the most exact enquiry, to be perfectly conformable to the reason and nature of things, as well as to the whole train of Antiquity?

BUT could not the highest mountains of the earth have been gradually covered by particular deluges, succeeding one another at several periods?

ANSWER, That nothing in nature is more irrational or unphilosophical, than such a supposition; as will immediately appear to any one, who considers the nature of water, which nothing but a miracle could raise to such a height, and such a state of suspension: and keep it in that state, so as to cover the
highest

highest mountains of the earth, and at the same time leave its lower regions dry.---But, however, if any man think it more rational to suppose a million of miracles in this case, than to admit the plain *Mosaic* account of this matter, he is at liberty, for me, to enjoy such suppositions, in full complacence.

OTHERS are fond of supposing, that the present phenomena ascribed to the deluge, are the effects of some disturbed or chaotick state of things, antecedent to the *Mosaic* creation ; ----- that is, in truth, such is the extrayagance of human vanity and perverseness ! we are fond of building upon every wild imagination that comes into our heads, however irrational and unsupported, rather than rest upon the credit of the most rational, the most credible, the most authentic accounts of things, when once they appear to us, under the insuperable disadvantage, of being inspired by God !

ANOTHER end of the divine wisdom and goodness, answered by the deluge, was, the taking off that curse from the earth, which God had pronounced upon it immediately after the fall. Now, that he did take off the curse from the earth, at this time, is evident both from scripture and reason.

WE read in *Genesis*, v. 28, 29, that when *Lamech* had lived an hundred eighty and two years, he begat a son, and called his name *Noah*, (which signifies *rest*) saying, *This shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands; because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.* This text is commonly explained by the subsequent account of *Noah's* being an husbandman, and finding out the use of wine; as if no more was meant by those words of *Lamech's*, than that *Noah*, by that invention, should bring great consolation to mankind, under the labours of life. Now this is evidently a wrong interpretation; for no man believes that *Noah* was the first husbandman; (that trade was as old as *Adam*) nor is there the least reason to believe from the text, that he first found out the art of making wine. 'Tis said, indeed, that he planted a vineyard; but certainly it does not follow from hence, that he was the first that did so; nay, the contrary seems much more probable from the text: for it is said, that *Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.* It seems evidently implied in these words, that *Noah* never had been a husbandman till this time. 'Tis probable the righteous race of *Seth*, were shepherds like *Abel*, and that *Noah* was an entire stranger to agriculture, till necessity made him turn his thoughts
that

that way, after the flood ; nor is it in the least likely, he should invent the way of making wine, at the very beginning of his applying to that profession. Suppose him the first planter of vines: Is it any way credible, that the very first planter of vines, invented wine? no surely. Does any man believe, that the first planter of orchards, invented cyder; or, that the first planter of any tree found out the way of fermenting liquors from the fruit of that tree? Nothing is less credible than such a supposition.

BESIDES, I think it credible from a passage in the new testament, that wine was invented before the flood. In the seventeenth chapter of St. *Luke*, and the twenty-sixth verse, our Saviour tells his disciples, that *as it was in the days of Noe, so should it also be in the days of the Son of man: they did eat, they drank, &c. till the day that Noe entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them. Also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, &c.* Now we know, that by eating and drinking in the days of the *Son of man*, is meant, feasting and drinking wine; and the same is also meant by eating and drinking in the days of *Lot*: and therefore, by parity of reason, the same should also be understood of the days of *Noe*; especially since this is the known sense in which our Saviour uses these words,

as may be seen from *Matt.* xi. 18, 19. *For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil; the Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber.* And can we after this suspect, that by eating and drinking in the days of *Noe*, is meant, any thing less than feasting and drinking wine?

BUT suppose *Noah* were the inventor of wine: How does the invention of wine take off the curse from the earth? And how small a number of those that toil in tilling it, are any way advantaged by that invention? And therefore the only rational interpretation of *Lamech's* speech upon the birth of *Noah*, is this; that he, being a prophet, foresaw that God would in his son's time, and out of a particular regard to his righteousness, take off the curse from the earth; and bestow all those blessings, upon him, and his race, which had never been bestowed upon any man since the fall. And we find, that, in fact, God Almighty did bless *Noah*, and his sons, after the flood, in the very same manner, in which he blessed *Adam* and *Eve* after the creation; and not only gave them dominion over the creatures, but likewise enlarged their charter; and gave them a right to the use of the creatures for food; with this additional assurance, that he would no more curse the earth for
the

the sins of mankind *. *Gen. viii. 21. And the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, &c.* The plain natural import of which words, seems to be, that the curse being taken off the earth, God would no more inflict it.

AND as this is the most rational account of this matter, from the testimony of scripture, 'tis evident, from the nature of the flood, that the curse must be taken off the earth, at that time, This appears from considering the flood, upon the foot of any rational hypothesis, that can be formed concerning it. If the curse was executed by with-holding rain from the earth, during the whole period before the flood, or a considerable part of it, (as possibly it might) 'tis evident, that the saturation of it with rain and salts, on that occasion, together with the constant supply of moisture from the clouds ever since, must effectually take off that curse, from that day to this. Add to this, that the infinite shoals of fish, and all the carcases of animals, which would naturally be left on the heights of the earth on this occasion, must have left a vast fund of fatness, to be gradually washed down thence upon the lower lands, by every shower from heaven. It must, indeed, be owned, that land animals cannot

* See this matter very ingeniously and clearly discuss'd in Dr. *Sherlock's* discourses of prophecy.

200 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

reasonably be supposed to have been so very numerous in that accursed state of the earth, as now ; but fish, doubtless, were more numerous : None of them, in all human probability, being destroyed for human food before that time ; — and as many kinds of fish swim in vast shoals, and all that we know of them, feed in shallow waters ; 'tis evident, that as the waters sunk fast, the surface of the earth being at the same time unequal, many of them also delighting in mud and slutch, vast numbers of them must be deserted upon the tops of the highest mountains ; and so proportionably, upon all lesser eminencies of the earth. Carcasses also of all kinds of land animals, floating in the waters, would naturally sink, where those waters were shallowest, that is, where the earth was highest : And as men also are very reasonably supposed to have been then immensely numerous, from their longevity, 'tis evident, they also must have greatly added to the treasure of rich mould, left upon the mountains on this occasion ; and in that condition to which the earth must necessarily be reduced at that time, 'tis evident all these carcasses would naturally sink into it, and so be covered over with mould, and mud, upon the drying of it again : which was necessary to prevent a pestilence from the corruption of those carcasses in open air.

BUT

BUT it is supposed by some, that mankind were but a small number at the time of the *Mosaic* deluge, and therefore an universal flood was not necessary.

I ANSWER, That this supposition is evidently erroneous, and for the reader's full satisfaction on this head, I refer him to Mr. *Whiston's* learned and rational account of this matter in his *theory of the earth*.

THAT there hath been particular deluges, is proved beyond all doubt, by many learned writers, ancient and modern * ; but then the authentic instances of this kind, which they give us, are only of level or low lands flooded from the accidental breaking of those banks or diques which kept out the sea ; but to imagine that high and mountainous regions, *Attica*, for example, and *Thessaly*, could be covered with water, and yet, that lower regions should continue dry at the same time, is a supposition attended with much more difficulty than an universal deluge.

THIS objection being removed, I think it evident, that the curse must have been taken off the earth by the deluge, according to that account of the matter, which is most natural and obvious to the apprehensions of mankind.

* See, in the present state of the republick of letters for October, 1731. printed for *William Innys*, London,——— A letter relating to some difficulties arising from reading Mr. Woodward's account of the manner and effects of the deluge.

OR suppose all the upper strata of the earth, to have been entirely torn off, by the rains and eruptions of water from the *fountains of the deep*, on this occasion: (as, I think, 'tis highly probable they were) 'tis evident, that, after these rains and eruptions were over, they would subside again for the most part, according to their specifick gravities: And consequently the bodies of all animals would subside last, and so sink into the mud as before. Except such as in this tumult should chance to be loaded, or otherwise entangled with heavier matter; and they, would necessarily be carried down, and mixed with the strata of such heavier matter, as they are found to be at this day. The fish also would swim and feed, and be deserted as before.

AND in this case, 'tis evident, that the earth would be, to all intents of fruitfulness, in full as good a condition, as that in which it was left, when God first removed the waters from it, at the creation, *and made the dry land appear*. Except what alterations might have been caused in it, by any new motion: or by its being placed in some different relation to the sun or planets at this time, which doubtless might occasion much difference in the temperament of the air; and
in

in consequence of that, in the vegetation of plants, and lives of animals.

IF it be asked, How rain could wash off all the upper layers of the earth? I answer, That cataracts of rain could do this in a few hours; nay, in a few minutes. And since the LXX interpret the *windows of heaven*, opened on this occasion, by the *cataracts* of heaven, there is reason to believe, that the rain, which introduced the deluge, began, at least, in cataracts.

THERE is an account in the philosophical * transactions, of a fall of water from the heavens, which, in a few minutes, tore up the earth seven foot deep, to the very rock which lay under it. If that rain had lasted a few days, nay, even a few hours, will any man say it might not have washed away much of the rock, if not all? And there is all the reason in the world to believe, that an infinite number of rocks were washed away at the deluge. How, otherwise, is it possible, that sea shells and sea animals of several kinds, should be found in the midst of rocks of marble at this day, as they frequently are? 'Tis notorious to a proverb, that a constant drop will wear away a stone: And

* *Motte's abridgment*, vol. 2. p. 215.

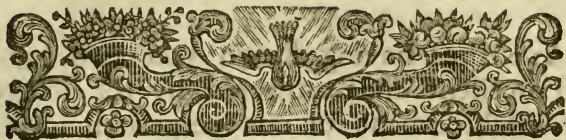
what rock can we imagine so hard, as not to yield to the violence of a continued cataract? The only difficulty is, how the particles of stone, so washed off, should become rocks again : but this difficulty is also removed, by considering, that upon the ceasing of the turbulent motion of the waters, their specifick gravity must make them subside together in great quantities ; and in that subsidence they might easily carry other bodies down with them, especially shells, which are nearly of their own specifick gravity : and since marble, now pounded into very small parts, is found easily to coalesce into masses of marble again ; (and might more easily do so in the earth from immense pressure) ; nothing is more conceivable, than how very small particles of marble might also coalesce in like manner at the deluge. And since God expressly declared on this occasion, (as you may read in the sixth chapter of *Genesis*) that he would *destroy all flesh, and the earth also*, (for so both the *Hebrew* and the *Greek* of this passage is plainly to be understood), I think it demonstrable from the effects of the deluge, now observed in the earth, that, in fact, what is properly call'd *earth*, that is, the upper strata of the globe, were actually and literally destroyed at that time ; and being destroyed and established again, as at the

creation, the curse, must, in the establishment of it, be taken off*.

AND thus having shewn you two great and excellent ends answered by the deluge, the establishment of one perpetual, incontestable memorial of the divine interposition for the punishment of sin,---and the taking off that curse from the earth, which was laid on after the fall: I now proceed, in a few words, to answer two objections of weight which lie against this doctrine; and so conclude.

* But if any man think it more credible, that these rocks might be form'd by secretions of the finer parts of stone from the earth, in the dissolution of its upper strata, on this occasion; (or by the petrification of certain kinds of clay) and can reconcile this opinion to the plain declarations of scripture; I shall not contend with him upon the matter: since it is evident, that rocks might be formed by the subsiding and coalescence of similar particles of stone, so sever'd from the earth, at this time; in the very same manner that they were formed at the first reduction of the *Chaos*, into form, by those laws which it hath pleased God to impress upon matter. Nor do I believe, that any man will pretend to say, Why stones might not be then formed in the earth by these laws; since we now see them daily formed in the bodies of living creatures, by laws less obvious to our understandings.

Nay possibly many of those strata, which are now stone, were originally clay, now petrified. (See more on this subject in *Motte's* abridgment of the philosoph. transact. vol. 2. p. 254. See also the letter in relation to *Dr. Woodward's* history before referred to.)



DISSERTATION XII.

Objections to the Mosaic account of the deluge, and this explication of it considered.



HE first is this: *That man still eats bread in the sweat of his brow; and that the earth is still cursed with thorns and thistles.*

I ANSWER, That the labour of one man, is now sufficient for the support of a great many; and consequently, a great majority of mankind, are exempted from the necessity of labouring in the earth: and by that means, are at liberty to be employed in those pursuits of knowledge, and those conveniences and ornaments of life, which can alone make it desirable to reasonable creatures. And such a growth of thorns and thistles, as defeats not this end, should rather

rather be considered, as a necessary, and a happy incitement to industry; for tho' God took the curse from the earth, yet human nature not being yet recovered to its original rectitude, which could only make a life exempted from labour, desirable: it could not be his intention, that men should pass away their lives in idleness and sloth: and I think it justly doubtful, whether thorns and thistles, which were demonstrably a curse to *Adam*, are not now rather blessings to his posterity; agreeably to God's great prerogative of power and wisdom, to produce good out of evil †.

AGAIN, the grant of the creatures for food, given immediately after the deluge, hath exceedingly lightened the labours of life, by lessening the necessity of tillage; and by that means, the curse of toil, imposed upon *Adam*, is, in a great measure removed. And this very grant seems plainly to imply,

† It is not, I believe, imagined, that thorns and weeds had no existence before the curse: how vexatious they might have been from that time till the flood, is impossible to say; that now, since the distinction of property, thorns are a vast blessing to the earth, is undeniable. — That thistles are here put for weeds in general, I take for granted; and, I believe, every candid man will find upon enquiry, that weeds now answer so many excellent ends and uses in life, as render them rather a blessing than a curse.

that

that the curse was now taken off the earth. For certainly, if the earth had not now been fitted to produce plenty of grain, as well as herbage, it could never sustain such a vast number of animals, as are now daily destroyed for food : many of which, are supported almost entirely by grain, (as most kinds of fowl) and others require great supplies of grain, as well as herbage ; all which the earth is now found sufficient to supply, with the toil of a comparatively small number of men. And besides this, great quantities of grain, are now employed in supplying mankind with those liquors, which cheer them under their toils ; and by that means, exceedingly lighten the labours of life. And, I believe, no one imagines that this was an advantage enjoyed by the antediluvian world. Add to all this, that where the earth is almost wholly exhausted by incessant tillage, 'tis common to see it surprizingly recruited, and enriched again at once, by the treasures deposited in it at the deluge ; as is the known case of marls, many of which are found to be nothing but huge heaps of sea-shells, thro' length of time dissolved in the earth. And, in all probability, all the kinds of marls are no more than the same substance, somewhat diversified by the different soils in which they are deposited.

SUCH

SUCH care hath the Divine wisdom and goodness taken, not only to perpetuate the proof of that great judgment, which sin brought upon the earth: but also to demonstrate, that at the same time that God punished sin, he remembered mercy; and in that very act of chastisement upon the wicked, laid up a blessing for the righteous; laid up wherewithal to reward honest industry, to the end of the world.

AGAIN 'tis objected, that when God established his covenant with *Noah*, never more to destroy the earth or the creatures by a flood, he appointed the rain-bow to be a signal of that covenant: now the rain-bow is only the effect of certain reflections and refractions of the rays of the sun from a watery cloud: and how can that be a signal that there shall be no deluge?

I ANSWER, That the rain-bow is the properest signal of such a covenant that can be imagined. For the reflection of the sun from a watery cloud, is a certain sign, that tho' it rains in one part of the heavens, some other part is clear and unclouded. And, 'tis evident, there can be no universal deluge, without an universal rain; such as would over-cast the whole heaven, and hide the sun; and probably take away all distinction
P of

of day and night. And as it is agreeable to reason to believe this, the accounts of the heathen, concerning the first deluge, which they call the flood of *Ogyges*, are agreeable to this belief. Thus *Solinus* tells us, that one continued night hid the day on that occasion, for many months together. Nor is the same thing obscurely implied to those words at the eighth chapter of *Genesis*, where God declares, immediately after the deluge, that he would never more smite the earth in the same manner: and to confirm that declaration, he adds, *While earth remaineth, seed-time, and harvest, and cold, and heat, and summer, and winter, and day and night shall not cease*. Now, 'tis certain, that seed-time and harvest, and summer and winter, (which are now to cease no more) had entirely ceased, without any distinction at this time: therefore we may fairly infer, that so had day and night too. Now this being granted, what could be in itself a more noble or enlivening emblem of hope, or a more rational and significant assurance against a second destruction by rain, than that glorious *bow of God* in the clouds! which demonstrates, that all the rain, which at any time threatens the earth, can only effect some particular portion of it; and is at the same time so peculiarly fitted to convey this hope, and this demonstration, to every region under heaven, and in every day

day throughout the whole year! which no other natural indication, in the universe, is fitted to do*.

AND if that heavenly bow was never before seen, till the moment that God made this declaration to *Noah*, (as it should seem from the very expression here used, that it was not); *I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth; and it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and the water shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.* I say, on supposition, that *Noah* had never before seen a rain-bow, (a supposition which the above declaration fairly justifies), how must that glorious phenomenon at once fill his eyes, with wonder and delight! and his heart, with joyful assurance! and that he never had seen any such appearance till that moment, is highly probable: since, 'tis evident, there might

* Those rains which now exhibit the rain-bow to our eyes, are gentle, refreshing showers, plainly intended as blessings to the earth; such Blessings, as, I think, cannot be fairly presumed to have been bestowed upon it, in its accursed state. --- And therefore, from the rain-bow being now seen, it can by no means be fairly inferred, that it was seen before the deluge.

212 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

have been rain for many ages without a rain-bow : which arises from the concurrence of several circumstances, which we are under no necessity of believing to have concurred, in the antediluvian state of things ; — at least, 'tis certain there could be no rain-bow without rain ; and there is no convincing reason to believe there was any rain before the flood : and this opinion is greatly strengthened at least, from these words in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, and the seventh verse : *By Faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house.*

Now if *Noah* had seen great rains and floods, drowning and overwhelming particular portions of the earth, before this time, such as we now daily observe, could the apostle properly call floods of devastations from rain, *things not yet seen* ? — From hence I infer, that *Noah* had seen no rain before the flood, at least no such rains as we now daily see ; and consequently, no rain-bow.

AND the tradition of antiquity concerning the rain-bow, seems strongly to confirm this opinion : for *Iris*, which is the name of the rain-bow with the *Greeks*, is said

said to be the daughter of * *Thaumas*, (*i. e.* the daughter of wonder), and the messenger of *Jupiter*, to carry his great oath to the other Gods, when they had offended. Now this seems to be a fable, plainly founded upon the solemn covenant now mentioned, which God made with man after the deluge. The covenant of God on this occasion, plainly implies the oath of God, as you may learn from *Isaiab* liv. 9. where God, declaring his resolution of mercy to the *Gentiles*, useth these words ; *For this is as the waters of Noah to me ; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn, that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*

WHEREAS then God, on this occasion, made a covenant with man by oath, and the rain-bow then first seen with astonishment in the heavens, was the signal of that covenant : what could be a more natural mythology founded upon these circumstances, than that *Iris was the daughter of wonder ; and the messenger of Jupiter, to carry his solemn oath.*

* Vid. *Hesiodi Theogen.* v. 780. & seq.

AND thus having, I hope, sufficiently vindicated the significancy of this sign, and the wisdom of God in appointing it, I shall, in my next dissertation, with God's assistance, consider the testimonies of antiquity relating to the deluge.





DISSERTATION XIII.

*Of the concurrence of all antiquity
with the Mosaic account of the
flood.*



HAVING ended
my dissertations,
concerning the
natural causes,
and providential
purposes of the deluge: I

Testimonies
cited by *Jose-
phus* and *Eu-
sebius*.

come now, to enquire, how far all the ac-
counts of antiquity, conspire to the attesta-
tion of this fact: beginning with the most
ancient.

A WORK, tho' of some labour, yet of
little praise to the author, or merit to the
Reader, more than what may arise from
saving him the trouble of revolving and
comparing the collections of learned men, on
this head; and deducing from them, that

216 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

evidence, which, upon due consideration, must naturally and necessarily result from such an enquiry.

AND here I take it for granted, that every candid reader must, in this case, admit the testimony of such writers, as quoted others, extant, and well known, at the time of such quotations, without any contradiction of their contemporaries, or the least imputation or suspicion of fraud, in the point. Such, for example, are the quotations of JOSEPHUS and EUSEBIUS, from the writings of BEROSUS, NICHOLAUS DAMASCENUS, ABIDENUS, and others, extant and well known in their times. Which quotations, have this fair presumption of truth : that if they had been any way falsified, they must have destroyed their author's credit, and defeated the very purposes which they were produced to establish.

It must be allowed, that quotations are so far false, as they are imperfect, thro' design ; or mistaken, thro' ignorance of original languages ; and that we are furnished with instances enough in both kinds, from many late writers, of great distinction. But I verily think, that both JOSEPHUS and EUSEBIUS, are clear of both these imputations. They quote from *Greek* ; and there is some presumption that they under-

der-

derstood it, because they wrote in it ; and quote in it at large, from writers and writings of all sorts ; and are so far from being skilled in the modern art, of breaking in, and breaking off, in the middle of a sentence, that the quotations which I have had occasion to consult in them, are introduced and concluded in the utmost simplicity ; and in the most natural chain of narration. And therefore they are clear of all suspicion, except on the head of direct designed corruption : and, I think, their design, their characters, and the ages in which they lived, abundantly acquit them upon that head. Their characters, and designs, will be better seen hereafter ; and as to the ages in which they wrote, it is well known that they were sufficiently learned, and prejudiced to their disadvantage. Ages, which wanted neither able nor active adversaries, to oppose the truths they advanced ; and to expose the least attempts to advance them, by any degree or colour of fallacy, or fraud ; as appears from many of their writings still extant. And as to such of them as carry any opposition to revelation, it is well known, that *Christians*, (in confidence of their own integrity, and the goodness of their cause), have not been afraid to preserve them, with as much care, as their own most valued writings ; insomuch that there is good reason to believe, that the very best and bitterest Books, that ever were published

218 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

published against divine revelation, are still extant ; either intire, or, at least, in the full weight and energy of their objections. No body that reads this, will, I believe, imagine that I mean those of modern *Free-thinkers*, which some people are hardy enough to regard, but as humble imitations, at the best, --- or wearisom repetitions ! But tho' they impeach these eminent writers, as defective in the little circumstances of stile, decency, skill, &c. they are, however, forced to do them this justice,--- that they have discovered as little variety of malice upon this subject, as of wit. No fault of modern infidels ---- the subject was exhausted.

THIS being premised, I now proceed to produce the testimonies of antiquity to the point before us, in the best and clearest order I can.

JOSEPHUS, in his first book against *Apion*, says of the *Chaldæans* in general, that all their histories and monuments of learning, had a great conformity with the *Jewish* : And of *Berosus* in particular, (who was priest of *Belus*, and contemporary with *Alexander the Great*), he tells us, that as he wrote of the astronomy and philosophy of the *Chaldæans*, for the use of the *Grecians*, he was well known to all who
were

were any way conversant in things relating to literature, (here is an appeal to the whole learned world for the truth of what he delivers on this point), and then adds these words ; --- *Now this* Berolus, *following the most antient writings, relateth the history of the flood, and the destruction of mankind, in it, in the same manner with Moses : Also of the ark in which Noah, the leader of our race, was saved ; which was carried to the summits of the Armenian mountains.*

HERE we are to take notice, that JOSEPHUS had before this, wrote to the same purpose, of BEROSUS's testimony concerning the deluge, (as shall be shewn immediately) ; and when he was attacked by *Apion*, as raising the dignity of the *Jewish* nation above their deserts ; they being a late upstart people, unknown to the rest of the world : He again appeals to the same BEROSUS, for the truth of what MOSES related ; and immediately after shews that BEROSUS was acquainted with the people of the *Jews*.

Now this vouching BEROSUS's testimony a second time, and in a warm dispute with an adversary, without the least hint that his first appeal to him had ever been contested, is surely a fair presumption, that that appeal was not contested : and that BEROSUS's account

count of the deluge, was perfectly agreeable to that of MOSES.

IN the first book of his *Jewish* antiquities, he tell us, * that the *Armenians* called the place where the ark rested, *Ἀρκηγεῖον*, (the descent), doubtless, because *Noah* descended from thence upon dry ground, and adds, *there the inhabitants now shew the remains of the ark*, ---- and that there is no improbability in this circumstance of the relation, shall be clearly shewn hereafter.

HE also adds, --- “ But of this deluge
“ and the ark, all they who wrote the
“ histories of the *Barbarians*, make mention,
“ of whom is *BEROSUS* the *Chaldean*; for he,
“ speaking of what concerned the deluge,
“ relateth to this purpose ;” Now it is said
that some part of that ship is yet extant in Armenia, in the mountain of the Cordyæi ; and that some carry about pieces of the Asphaltus which they take from it, and that men make use of what is so carried about, for the most part, as a kind of charm to avert evil.

JOSEPHUS also adds the testimonies of many other writers to the same purpose ;

* Antiq. Jud. l. i. c. 3.

as follows; --- “ But of these things also
 “ HIERONIMUS the *Egyptian*, makes men-
 “ tion ; who also wrote the *Phœnician*
 “ archæology ; MNASEAS also, and many
 “ others. Also NICHOLAUS of *Damascus*,
 “ gives us an historical relation of these
 “ things, in this manner.

THERE is above Minyas a great mountain in Armenia, called Baris, to which it is reported, that many flying at the time of the deluge, were there saved ; and that a certain person, carried in an ark, arrived on the summit of the mountain : and that the reliques of the wood were preserved a long time. And possibly this may be the same man, of whom MOSES, the lawgiver of the Jews, wrote.

IT is generally deemed disadvantageous to an author, to be defended before he is attacked : but as infidels have found a new way of blasting the credit of writers, not by critical dissertations, or proofs of ignorance, or insincerity, (for this would be appealing to reason and truth), but by the unanswerable argument of scorn and light contempt, it will not, I hope, be amiss, on all occasions, to place the characters of authors in a true light : that the candid reader may judge for himself ; and distinguish as he ought between insolence and superior light. And besides this, perhaps, the best way of dealing

222 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ing with infidelity, (as with other diseases), is to prevent it.

THERE is no subject in this world, upon which, abstracted and speculative men, may not refine, far above common sense, and common conceptions. But men of plain talents ; will, I believe, be at a loss to think, why any writer should so diligently compile such a heap of testimonies, and with so many particularities, upon one point : and this in a court, where the language he wrote in, was familiar, (as the *Greek* language and learning was in that of the *Cæsars*), and to an emperor, and in an age, and country, perfectly well acquainted with the then state of the world, but from one of these two ends ; either to ascertain an important truth, beyond all possibility of doubt, --- or to make himself contemptible and detestable to all mankind, as the vilest and shameledest impostor, that ever lived. And that JOSEPHUS was never considered under this character, in the *Roman* court, but quite otherwise, is, I believe, past all doubt.

JOSEPHUS was a man of great quality, as well as learning ; and not altogether clear of the suspicion of being a *Free-thinker* ; at least, if examining all things, with great industry and attention, and then adhering to that which he thought best, can justly entitle any
man

man to that character. He despised riches, and gave great proofs both of prudence, probity, and piety *. Proofs which needed no attestation at the court of *Rome*. He was a man of fortitude, --- and when necessity called, he hazarded his life, for the religion and liberties of his country, --- and he defended his religion, with his pen, at a time when both that and his country were ruined: without the least prospect of the restoration of either. I own, I cannot easily suspect such a man of imposture, ---- (nor can I learn that ever he was suspected) especially, an imposture which implies equal stupidity and depravity in the author! as an infinity of false quotations, necessarily must. And if *JOSEPHUS*'s veracity is to be depended upon, we then have the testimonies of all the antient nations, of the then known world, who had any early learning amongst them, full to this point of the deluge. *Chaldeans, Egyptians, Syrians, Phœnicians, Jews!* with no more variety, than is commonly observed, in relation to all other facts confessedly true. And if we find no clear historical accounts of this matter, among the *Greeks*, we should remember, that learning came late amongst them; and that they had no histories, memorials, or records of any kind, till long after the *Trojan* war. And

* See his life.

that all that period of time, antecedent to this æra is allowed to be dark and *fabulous*. And therefore we cannot reasonably expect any account of this point, amongst them, but such as is involved in fables. And that there are memorials enough of that kind, to be met with in their mythology, will, I hope, be fully shewn hereafter.

IN the next place, EUSEBIUS * supplies us with an extract from ABYDENUS, concerning the deluge, to this purpose, *viz.* that *Chronos* (or *Saturn*) foretold *Sisithrus*, of a vast flood of rain that was to fall; and commanded him, to hide whatever learning he could compile, in *Heliopolis*, a city of the *Sippari*; that he obeyed, and sail'd immediately towards *Armenia*; that the divine prediction came quick upon him; and that on the third day, after the tempest was ceased, he made an experiment by birds, to find whether they could see any land emerging from the water: and that they launching out into an uninterrupted ocean, and not knowing which way to steer, returned to *Sisithrus*. That others were sent out after them, and that the third trial was successful. The birds returning with their feet, (not as the common translations have it,

* Prepar. evangel, l. 9. c. 12. Paris ed.

their *wings*) all muddled. — He then adds, that the gods made him (*i. e. Sifithrus*) disappear; but the ship arrived at *Armenia*; and afforded the people of the country, amulets of the wood, to drive away diseases.

NOR is ABYDENUS the only historian, that records this account of *Sifithrus*. ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR * gives the same account in substance; tho' with some more particularities. He says, that *Sifithrus* escaped a great deluge; — and takes notice, that his safety was owing to the premonition of *Saturn*. That he escaped by means of an ark, which he had provided for the purpose; in which also, birds, beasts, and creeping things were preserved with him.

HERE then are two other testimonies, differing in the manner, and in the stile, remarkably from one another, and from all the rest: and yet agreeing, in the main, with *Moses*; That there was a flood: — That it was foretold: — That a certain person was saved from it; and saved in an ark, or ship. — And the superstitions of the country, (mentioned by ABYDENUS), plainly imply an opinion, that there was something

* Apud Cyril. contra Julian. l. 1.

sacred in that vessel. And what could so naturally suggest to them, that the wood of it, should be an amulet against evil, as a constant tradition, that this vessel was protected from all evil, by the immediate providence of God?

EUSEBIUS also supplies us with another testimony from the same ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR, which, I think, is out of the reach of all reasonable exception; as it is the testimony of a candid and impartial writer, quoting the testimony of one who wrote in professed enmity to the *Jews*.

THIS ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR, whom EUSEBIUS represents, as a writer of great talents and learning, eminently known to all men of letters, among the *Greeks*, quotes MELO in these words; — *But Melo, who wrote industriously against the Jews, says, That after the deluge, a man who survived, with his sons, being expelled from his possessions in Armenia, by his country-men, traversing the intermediate region, came to the mountainous part of Syria, then desert, and that after three generations, Abraham was born, &c.*

Now this seems to be a jumbled account, made up of a confusion of what passed at the deluge, with *Terah's* migration with his son *Abraham* from his own country. But thus
much

much must confessedly be deduced from it ; — that there was a deluge ; — that one man and his sons escaped it ; — and that this man afterwards resided in *Armenia*. It must be owned, that this account contradicts the *Mosaic* in some circumstances : And could we expect that an enemy should agree with him in all ? It is sufficient to our purpose, that it confirms the main point in question.

THESE are the testimonies cited by EUSEBIUS, upon the point before us. I will not pretend to acquit him, or any other mortal, of human infirmities ; but this I will say, that he is clear of all suspicion of fraud in these citations :

1st, INASMUCH as he hath escaped the censure of his cotemporaries upon that head.

2^{dly}, INASMUCH as he hath never, that I know of, been detected, or even arraigned of fraud by any subsequent writers, — tho' he hath sufficiently been hated by many of them. SCALIGER, his mortal enemy, impeaches his judgment, but without any imputation upon his integrity ; and many zealous *Christians* of all ages, were so in-

228 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ceded, * and are still so incensed against him, for heresy, and have carried their revilings on that head, so far beyond any foundation of truth, that had it been possible to blast his credit, infidels had long since been saved the toil of endeavouring it.

3dly, His character entirely acquits him to me, and, I think, must to all reasonable men.

AND 4thly, His whole conduct throughout this whole work of the *evangelick preparation*.

THE reader, I hope, will indulge me a little upon these two last heads.

IN the first place then, EUSEBIUS knew how to think for himself (which, I will not presume to say, is always the case of all those that differ from him).

WHOEVER peruses his *evangelick preparations*, will find that he ransacks the learning of the whole world ! examines the theology of all nations ; shews where they are faulty, and where right ; examines the prin-

* Jerom. Photius, Baronius, &c. See also the dedication of his *Præpar. Evan.* Paris, edit.

ciples and opinions of all the philosophers, of all sects: compares them, — and upon the comparison, prefers. Shews the *Platonick*, to be far preferable to all the rest, — and why. Proves by a great variety of arguments, and compass of learning, that it was derived from the *Jews*. — Shews where it agrees, and where it differs; — that *Plato* copied from *Moses*: tho' not without mixture of fable and error. That where he agrees with him, his philosophy is right, and rational; and his theology, worthy of God. — That where he differs from him, he is immoral, erroneous, and impious. And assigns this expressly (on several occasions) as the reason, why he rejected the philosophy of *Plato*, and embraced that of the *Jews*.

ALL this considered, I hope, I may be allowed to say, that EUSEBIUS knew how to think for himself. I will venture to say more, — if they who despise his authority, thought half as much, and as *freely* as he did, they would revere it more. At least, I hope, they will forgive my infirmity in thinking so, — in thinking, that they would then be as much better believers, as they would unquestionably be wiser men.

BUT EUSEBIUS did not content himself with examining the wildom of the whole world, and preferring the *Jewish* upon the comparison.—— He thought it also necessary to enquire into truth of fact. —— He considered, that *Moses* related many strange things ; the creation, paradise, the first pair, the delusion of the serpent, the longevity of the first men, their corruption, and the destruction it drew down, in the deluge, — the building of *Babel* soon after, —— the defeat of that attempt, —— the dispersion of mankind, —— the descent of the *Jews* from *Abraham*, &c. He concluded very justly, that if such men and things ever existed, or such strange events ever came to pass, there must surely be some traditions, monuments, or memorials of them in the world. And accordingly he examines the archives, and ransacks the histories of all ages, and nations ; their antiquities and traditions ; and finds, that tho' they all differed vastly from one another, in the circumstances of times, places, and names, yet that they all agreed with the *Mosaic* account in the main. It was obvious for him, to apprehend, that the difference of languages, and the different care or negligence of nations in preserving memorials, must, of necessity, cause a variety in the forementioned circumstances, of times, places, and names : and that such a variety,

variety, was so far from prejudicing, that it greatly confirmed the truth of facts. And if he once considered the authenticity of histories, and compared the fidelity of nations, and their care in keeping the memorials of preceding times, it was impossible not to prefer the national care and fidelity of the *Jews* in this point, to that of all other nations in the world.

1st, BECAUSE they had publick officers appointed for this purpose, and both these officers, and the nation in general, were utterly regardless of all accounts of other countries; and so could neither borrow nor mix any of their own with them.

2^{dly}, BECAUSE the original book, in which the history of the world, and their own nation, was contained, was professedly, and beyond all suspicion or possibility of doubt, both written and published in the presence of their forefathers.

3^{dly}, BECAUSE it was beyond all question, the oldest book in the world,

AND 4^{thly}, BECAUSE it was kept with more care than any other book in the world; in the most sacred recess of the tabernacle first, and afterwards, of the temple; and continued there, till their national captivity

and disperſion ; and at the ſame time, copies of this book, were in the hands of all the people : — every king, at his acceſſion to the throne, was obliged with his own hand, to tranſcribe a copy of this book, from the original ; — and every private perſon, to get a great part of it, by heart. And every man amongſt them, bore about him, from his earlieſt infancy, a ſure mark of the national regard to it, from father to ſon, from age to age. It was read conſtantly and regularly to them all, at ſtated and fixed times, by men appointed and maintained for that purpoſe. It was the great buſineſs of their lives, to ſtudy and to excel in the knowledge of it. And they who did ſo with moſt ſucceſs, were always in the higheſt eſteem amongſt them.

BESIDES all this, — this one book, was their ſole rule of duty, private, and publick. Their ſole *magna charta*, *code*, and ſtatute-book. For all their rights, privileges, and publick adminiſtration of juſtice.

IN one word, any man that conſidered this point with due attention, could not but find, that it was their ſole rule of domeſtick life, civil government, and publick worſhip ; and conſequently, that it was impoſſible to falſify it, in any thing material ; ſo far as much, as there was a neceſſity of appealing to it,
in

in ten thousand instances, every day of the year.

AND if, after all this, EUSEBIUS acted irrationally, in accepting this book as genuine and authentick, and believing the facts contained in it, there is no such thing as a reasonable conduct, or a rational evidence, in this world.

I BEGG leave to mention some other circumstances of EUSEBIUS's character, — Any man that considers the history of his times, and of his life, must, I think, find him as eminent, as any man of his own, or, perhaps, of any other age, for temper, moderation, dignity, disinterestedness, and a generous contempt of wealth and grandeur: — and, I must own, that these are to me in the place of ten thousand proofs of integrity. — I cannot suspect that spirit, of fraud or artifice; — *suspect* did I say? — I retract the expression; — I cannot but revere the memory, and venerate the virtue, the primitive virtue of that man, who could, from the influence of a good conscience, look down upon grandeur! could, in the heighth of princely favour, refuse the bounty of an emperor, to his episcopal church; and endow it liberally with his own! — who could refuse the richest and the noblest bishoprick of all the *East*, (tho' elected and
invited

invited to it in the most honourable and engaging manner) upon a principle of apostolick integrity.

IN the next place, I hope, I may be allowed, with all humility, to suppose, that this author was not an ideot. I would not offend the more enlightened reader, — I mean, not an ideot in any thing, but his *Christian faith*. Nor can I learn from the histories of those times, that bishops were then generally deemed abandoned, and void of principles. And yet, unless EUSEBIUS was so, to the most shameless degree imaginable, how is it possible to imagine, that he should dare to forge or falsify numberless quotations, from authors then in the hands of all men of learning, declaring at the same time, that they were in the hands of all men of learning; and perfectly known to them. And that he should do this, in a language then universally known! in that very act, challenging the whole world to detect him! and at the same time supplying them with the means to do it! I confess, I am a believer, I mean, a *Christian believer*: but they who are not, will, I hope, forgive me, if I cannot go their lengths in credulity! I cannot believe this of EUSEBIUS, because I think it were incredible of *Diagoras*, — of the greatest infidel now alive!

I OWN, that all bishops are not now in all the veneration I could wish them. Men are sufficiently inclined to credit things to their disadvantage; yet I should imagine him very credulous, who could believe this of a *Christian* bishop, even now! a bishop, living in this remote region of the earth, and writing in the language of it; a language confined to itself, and its colonies! I should imagine that such a man would content himself, even in this happier age of free-thinking, with being silently in the wrong, — without proclaiming his shame and setting his seal to it! and what seems to me so incredible of a modern bishop, *now*, and *here*, is, I should think, much more so, of a primitive *Christian* bishop; (a bishop who could refuse the see of *Antioch*); in an age, when men seem to have been serious in religion. — A bishop living in the light of *Asia*, (*in luce Asiae*) as *Cicero* expresses it. And himself then one of the greatest lights of *Asia*! writing in a language known to the whole world!

AND as the character of EUSEBIUS shews him superior to all exception, his conduct throughout this whole work of the *evangelick preparation*, proves him yet more so, if possible. He undertook this great work, for the conversion of the heathen world; appealing

236 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

pealing to books in their own hands; Can there be a fairer mark of an honest conduct, — of open honesty than this? If he had falsified in the appeal, must he not of necessity defeat his own purpose, with infamy to himself, and to his cause?

JOSEPHUS quoted a great number of works and writings in his history, and in his dispute with *Apion*, (that is, in effect, with the heathen world): but *EUSEBIUS*, works and writers without number! I will venture to say, not less than four-score, in his fifteen books of the *evangelick preparation*; every quotation, either forged, or falsified, is a mark of imposture; if he is an impostor, he can't have given less than a thousand proofs of it. He quotes *JOSEPHUS* for many authorities, cited, and vouched unreproved, long before. And he himself quotes other authorities from some of the same books; — he quotes *Clemens Alexandrinus*, at large, who had himself quoted authorities, without number; and many other authors in the same manner; a strange complicated series of forgeries! a long chain linked one into another, and yet no appearance of prevarication or corruption! no detection, even from anachronism or inconsistency!

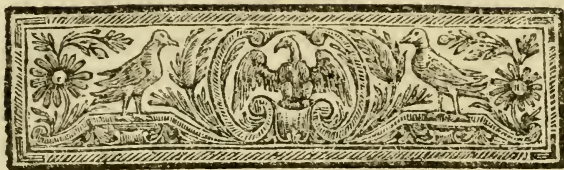
IN one word, if this man hath forged and falsified, he hath done it in a manner, which
no

no other man ever did from the foundation of the world.—If he hath done so, it is a problem far above my abilities, to explain why he hath, (to use *Æschines's* expression to *Demosthenes*) thus *abused all the marks and characters of honesty, to all the purposes of villany*, and why no man hath ever vindicated this abuse.

THE sum of all, is this,

WHAT, I think, in itself utterly incredible, I could believe of no man alive or dead. — What I could believe of no man, I could less believe of a *Christian* bishop now. — What I could believe of no *Christian* bishop now, I could yet less believe of EUSEBIUS.





DISSERTATION XIV.

Of other testimonies relating to the deluge.



H A V E, in the preceding dissertation, designedly omitted a testimony from *Berosus*, cited by Sir *Walter Raleigh*, (b. I. c. 7.) inasmuch as the book now extant under the name of that writer, is justly supposed to be corrupted; nor have I been able to learn upon what authority that great man judged this passage genuine; — but that he esteemed it such, I think is evident, from his quoting it without any mark or suspicion of reproach. For soon after he hath cited it, he adds these words, “ But *Berosus* “ (who, after *Moses*, was one of the most “ antient, however he hath been since de- “ formed and corrupted) doth, in the substance of all, agree with *Moses* as touching

“ ing the general flood, taking from thence
 “ the beginning of his history in these
 “ words ; — *Before that famous destruction*
 “ *of waters by which the world universal*
 “ *perished* : witnessing withal, that *Noah*
 “ with his Wife *Titea*, and his three sons
 “ with their three wives (in all eight per-
 “ sons) were only saved. ”

THAT Sir *Walter Raleigh* was a great man,
 and a good critick, will not, I believe, be
 denied : and that he never was suspected of
 superstition, credulity, or unreasonable par-
 tiality to religion, is undoubted : taking it
 for granted then, that this quotation from
Berosus is genuine, I think the building of
Babel, by the Sons of *Noah* by *Titea* (soon
 after the flood), with tower upon tower,
 might have given the most natural occasion
 to the mythology of the invasion of heaven
 by the *Titans*, heaping one mountain upon
 another.

I NOW proceed to enquire for some memo-
 rials of the deluge in the *Greek* mythology.
 And, I think, we need search no further on
 this head, than their own fabulous accounts
 of the two deluges of *Ogyges* and *Deucalion* :
 following one another at the distance of
 about two hundred years.

Now

Now particular deluges, in which whole mountainous regions (such as *Attica* and *Theffaly*) were overwhelmed with water, are (as I before observed) attended with more difficulties, and consequently, are much less credible than an universal deluge. And therefore, since both these are supposed by them to have happened in that age, which is confessedly obscure: long before they had the use of letters, or publick records of any kind, they deserve to be no otherwise regarded, than as traditions of the universal deluge, corrupted agreeably to the ignorance of the times, and genius of that vain people, who vaunted their own antiquity above all other nations; and because the oldest nations had memorials of one deluge, which drowned the world, they resolved to be distinguished by the singularity of two deluges; but then we must do them this justice, that they always considered *Deucalion's* deluge as universal; in which he saved himself, his wife, and some few others on the mountains of *Theffaly*, and so was regarded as the restorer of mankind, — as *Strabo* certifies *.

CRITICKS also find, with sufficient appearance of truth, their *Bacchus*, (anciently

* L. 9.

Boachus)

Boachus) in *Noah*, the first planter of vines; one letter changed either by accident or design, makes all the difference between their names; and *Noah's* planting the vine, and subsequent drunkenness, recorded in the scripture, is foundation enough for all the rest of the fable of *Bacchus*.

THEIR *Janus* also, who saw before and behind, is doubtless no other than *Noah*; who saw the ante-diluvian, and post-diluvian worlds. — And Sir *Walter Raleigh* observes, that this name might very naturally be derived from the *Hebrew* word יין [*jain*], which signifies wine.

NOAH seems also to be fully figured out to us under the character of *Saturn*.

WHO is represented at one time, as driven down from *Olympus* by his son. — At another, as devouring all his children, except three, which were concealed from him. At another, as dividing the whole world between his three remaining sons. — And at another, as the common parent of mankind, and reclaiming the savage lives of the first mortals, who lived on mountains, and fed upon acorns: — giving them laws, and teaching them culture; with several other circumstances; — such as only one language among mankind in his time, — his

being a teacher of justice,---and author of that law which forbad to behold the gods naked*.

THE descent of *Noah* from the high mountain, on which the ark rested; the destruction of all his own family with the rest of mankind, except his three sons; and the distribution of the world afterwards among these three sons, and their descendants, and he himself being the parent of all the race of mankind then in the world, and their lawgiver in the character of common parent, being also an husbandman, and teaching the art of cultivating the earth to his sons; his nakedness being seen by one of his wicked sons, and the curse denounced upon him for it---All these circumstances united, very naturally gave rise to all these fabulous accounts of *Saturn*, among a people who delighted in fiction, and despised plain truths.

IF we proceed from the mythology of the *Greeks*, to the more serious writings of their philosophers and philologists, we shall find not only clear undisguised memorials of the deluge amongst them, but likewise such as exactly correspond with the *Mosaic* account. I shall mention but three of these writers, --- *Plato*, *Plutarch*, and *Lucian*.

* See Bochart's *Phaleg*. l. i. c. i.

PLATO's testimony is thus quoted by Sir *Walter Raleigh* (l. i. c. 7. §. 4.) " And
 " *Plato* in *Timæo* produceth an *Egyptian*
 " priest, who recounted to *Solon*, out of the
 " holy books of *Egypt*, the story of the
 " flood universal, (which saith he) happened
 " long before the *Grecian* inundations.

PLATO also mentions the deluge in the third book of his laws.

PLUTARCH's testimony is thus cited by *Ray*, in his *consequences of the deluge*, p. 65.

" PLUTARCH, in his book *de solertia*
 " *animalium*, tells us, that those who have
 " written of *Deucalion's* flood, report, that
 " there was a dove sent out of the ark by
 " *Deucalion*, which returning again into the
 " ark, was a sign of the continuance of the
 " flood; but flying quite away, and not re-
 " turning any more, was a sign of serenity,
 " and that the earth was drained.

THE same author quotes *Lucian's* testimony upon this head, p. 67. in the following manner;

" LUCIAN, in his *Timon*, and in his
 " book *de Dea Syria*, sets forth the particu-
 R 2 " lars

244 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

“ lars of *Deucalion's*, after the example of
 “ *Noah's flood*. Δευκαλίων δε μὲν ἄνθρω-
 “ πων ἐλίπετο εἰς γένεον δευτεραν εὐδαλίας τε καὶ
 “ τῆ εὐσεβείας ἕνεκα, &c. *Deucalion was the*
 “ *only man that was left for a second genera-*
 “ *tion, for his prudence and piety sake ; and*
 “ *was saved in this manner : he made a great*
 “ *ark, and got aboard it, with his wife and*
 “ *children ; and to him came swine, and*
 “ *horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other*
 “ *living creatures, which the earth maintains,*
 “ *according to their kinds by pairs ; and he*
 “ *received them all, and they hurt him not ;*
 “ *for there was by divine instinct, a great*
 “ *friendship among them ; and they sailed to-*
 “ *gether in the ark, so long as the waters*
 “ *prevailed.”* And in his *Timon* he saith,
 “ *That Noah laid up in his ark plenty of all*
 “ *provisions for their sustenance.”* And lest
Lucian should be suspected of being beholden
 to revelation, for any information in this
 point, he takes care to let us know, that he
 had this account of the ark and deluge, from
 the *Grecians*.

THE same learned author *Mr. Ray*, quotes
 other testimonies upon this head, which the
 curious reader may more largely consult at
 his leisure.

THE testimonies of *Latin* writers succeed
 next in order, to those of the *Greeks*. Of
 these

these also I shall only cite some men of note, chiefly these ; *Fabius Pictor*, *Pliny*, and *Ammianus Marcellinus*. The first of these is thus quoted by Sir *Walter Raleigh* (l. i. c. 7. §. 7.)

“ OF the antiquity of *Janus*, *Fabius*
“ *Pictor* giveth this testimony: [I omit the
“ *Latin*] *In the time of Janus* (saith he)
“ *there was no monarchy: for the desire of*
“ *rule, had not then folded itself about the*
“ *hearts of men. Janus first taught the*
“ *people to sacrifice wine and meal: he*
“ *first set up altars, instituted gardens and*
“ *solitary groves, wherein they used to pray;*
“ *with other holy rites and ceremonies.”*
Sir *Walter* then proceeds thus, — “ A
“ greater testimony than this, there cannot
“ be found among the *heathen*, which in all
“ agree so well with the scriptures. For
“ first, whilst *Noah* flourished, there was
“ not any king, or monarch; *Nimrod* being
“ the first that took on him sovereign au-
“ thority. Secondly, *Noah*, after the flood,
“ was the first that planted the vine, and
“ became an husbandman; and therefore
“ offered the first-fruits of both (to wit)
“ wine and meal. Thirdly, he was the
“ first that raised an altar, and offered sacri-
“ fice to God, a thanksgiving for his merci-
“ ful goodness towards him.”

HERE we see that the *Jamus* of the *Greeks*, is evidently the *Ncab* of the bible; with perfect agreement in the main; and no more difference than such as naturally distinguishes true history from uncertain and fabulous tradition.

THE next testimony in order, is that of *Pliny*; or, to speak more properly, that of *Pliny*, *Mela*, and *Solinus*, united, which Sir *Walter Raleigh* (*ibid.*) mentions in this manner; — “For whereas *Mela*, *Pliny*,
“and *Solinus* witness, that the city of *Joppe*
“in *Judæa*, was founded before the flood;
“and that (notwithstanding the height of
“waters) there remained on certain altars
“of stone, the title of the king, and of his
“brother *Phineus*, with many of the grounds
“of their religion: sure it is no where found,
“&c.

FROM the testimony of these three learned writers, who made it their business to enquire after every thing curious over the face of the earth, added to *Josephus's* account of the pillars of *Seth*, we may fairly infer, that there was an universal tradition not only of some premonition given to mankind before the flood, of that approaching ruine, but likewise, that some monuments of the ante-diluvian world out-last ed that de-

devastation ; — for this seems to be the most natural reason of the principles of religion inscribed upon such massy and durable altars here : (for such they must be supposed, when they are supposed strong enough to bear the force of the flood) as of the improvements of science engraved on the pillars of *Seth*. And this observation will be yet further confirmed by the testimony of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, which follows next in order,

IN the 22d book of his history (c. 15. p. 263. of *Gronovius's* edition), among other curiosities of *Egypt*, he describes their *Syrinxes* in these words ; — *Sunt & syringes subterranei quidam & flexuosi recessus, quos, (ut fertur) periti rituum veterum, adventare diluvium præscii, metuentesque ne ceremoniarum oblitteraretur memoria, penitus operosis digestos fodinis per loca diversa struxerunt : et excisis parietibus volucrum ferarumque genera multa sculpsērunt, & animalium species innumeras quas hieroglyphicas litteras appellarunt.*

THE sense of which, in *English*, is thus ;
 — “ There are also (in *Egypt*) *Syrinxes*,
 “ certain subterraneous and winding recesses,
 “ which (as it is said) men skilled in antient
 “ rites, foreknowing the coming of the de-
 “ luge, and fearing that the memory of
 R 4 “ their

“ their ceremonies should be blotted out,
 “ hewed and fashioned out of quarries in
 “ several places, with immense labour, and
 “ carved on the walls which they had so
 “ hewn, many kinds of fowls, and wild
 “ beasts, and figures of animals innumera-
 “ ble, which they call hieroglyphick (so
 “ some read the text) or sacred characters.”

THE learned commentator, who published this edition, cites several other testimonies to this purpose, particularly that of *Manetho* from *Eusebius*. — If then we compare these accounts with that of *Abydenus* beforementioned, who tells us, that *Sisithrus* was commanded by *Saturn*, before the flood came on, to compile all the learning he could, and deposit it in the city of *He-liopolis*, we shall have reason to believe, that the tradition of warning given to mankind, of the approaching destruction by a deluge, was familiar over the world; and consequently, we are well justified in believing from the bible, that God gave notice of it, by *Noah*, an hundred and twenty years before it arrived. And if these caverns were really formed before that time, as possibly they might; that time will, I believe, be thought little enough to be allowed for finishing works of such immense labour and art.

IN collecting these testimonies of antiquity concerning the deluge, I have omitted numbers cited by the learned authors whom I have consulted in collecting these; particularly *Bochart*. It were easy to lengthen out this list of witnesses with a long series of poets, historians, geographers, philologists, antiquaries; it being, in truth, much more difficult to make choice, than to find numbers: but as the reader, is, I believe, by this time, fully satisfied, if not sated, I shall only beg his patience and attention to two or three testimonies, of a different kind from those already urged.

THE first is, that the tradition of the deluge was as familiar in *America* upon its first discovery, as in any other known region of the earth.

THE second is, that some imperfect memory both of *Noah* and his ark, seems to subsist even among the *Hottentots*. They say, their first parents came into their country through a window; that the name of the man was *Nôh*, and the woman *Hingnok*, &c. See *Kolben's present state of the cape of good hope*, p. 29.

THE third is, that as the names of cities, countries, rivers, &c. are usually derived

derived from their founders or original inhabitants, or their descendants solicitous to do honour to their ancestors, Sir *Walter Raleigh* observes, that many rivers, cities, and mountains, were denominated from *Noah*; — his words are these;

“ FURTHERMORE, to the end that the
 “ memory of this second parent of mankind
 “ might the better be preserved, there were
 “ founded by his issues many great cities,
 “ which bear his name, with many rivers
 “ and mountains; which many times forgot
 “ that it was done in his regard, because
 “ the many names given him, brought the
 “ same confusion to places as to himself.
 “ Notwithstanding all which, we find the
 “ city of *Noah* upon the banks of the *Red-*
 “ *sea*, and elsewhere: the river of *Noas* in
 “ *Thrace*, which *Strabo* calls *Noarus*; *Pto-*
 “ *lemy Danus*; dividing *Ilyria* from *Pan-*
 “ *nonia*. Thus much for the name.”

ALSO that many countries, regions, &c. were denominated from *Noah's* descendants, mentioned by *Moses*, needs no proof.

IN the last place, as it was natural that upon the invention of coins, memorials of remarkable events should be preserved in their impressions, and inscriptions, by persons most concerned to do so; neither is this
 kind

kind of testimony wanting to perpetuate the memory of the deluge.

Now not to insist upon the impression of a ship, recorded and seen on the oldest *Italian* coins, in memory of *Saturn*, who was certainly no other than *Noah*; I shall beg leave to mention two later coins, whose impressions are found, together with a long and learned dissertation upon one of them, at the end of *Falconerius's inscriptiones athleticæ*, printed at *Rome*, *A. D.* 1668. — These coins this learned antiquary treats as very rare and valuable curiosities; and considered as such, by all virtuoso's of eminence. ---And as that dissertation is scarce in this part of the world, the reader, I hope, will not be displeased to see an extract of it, as short and as exact as I could make it.

It was customary with the *Roman* provinces, when visited by any of the *Cæsars*, to compliment them by striking coins on the occasion, to perpetuate the honour done them. Two of these, one in honour of *Severus*, and the other of *Philippus Arabs*, are found with an ark, and other memorials of the deluge, on the reverse. The inscription of *Severus's* coin is thus distinguished and explained by *Falconerius*.

ΑΤΤ. Κ. Α. ΣΕΠΤ. ΣΕΟΥΗΡΟΣ ΠΕΡΤΙ.
Imp. Cæs. L. Sept. Severus Pertinax. [The emperor *Cæsar Lucius Septimius Severus Pertinax*]. As to the reverse of this coin, our learned antiquary seems to be lost in a refinement in relation to the figure of the *ark*, which, I own, I do not well comprehend; all that I see, is, that it exhibits to a common eye, the figure of a square box, floating on the water; open at the top, with the figures of a man and woman in it; a bird standing at one corner, supposed to be a dove, and another on the wing, approaching the opposite corner, with a branch of laurel in its talons.—Before the ark are the figures of a man and woman resembling those within, and supposed to be *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha*; with their right-hands lifted up, seemingly in a posture of devotion: or, as my author thinks, with their hands prepared to take up those stones which they were commanded to cast behind them, for the restoration of the human race. All this needs no comment: it explains itself. — The inscription on this side of the coin, our learned author distinguishes into the following words. ΕΠΙ ΑΓΩΝΟΘΕΤΟΥ ΑΡΤΕ. ΜΑΓΝΗΤΩΝ ΑΠΑΜΕΩΝ. *Sub Agonotheta Arte. Magnetum Apamensium.* The word *Arte*. here, is an abridgment of the name of the magistrate who presided over the publick exercises: and the sense of the inscription is
this,

this, that *this coin was struck in the magistracy of Arte. president of the publick exercises of the Magnesians and Apamæans.* The reader is to know, or remember, that the presidency of the publick games and exercises, was a magistracy of great dignity in the heathen world; insomuch, that the years were distinguished in their publick records, by the names of such magistrates; who were known by a great variety of titles and privileges.

THE learned author of this dissertation, supposes the memory of *Deucalion*, to have been preserved, as part of the religious rites of the *Syrian goddesses*; before whom a representation of *Deucalion*, and the deluge, was carried twice a year in those solemn processions, wherein water was carried from the sea, to the temple of that goddess, at *Hieropolis*: in memory of *Deucalion's* deliverance from the deluge, after which he is said to have dedicated this temple. — And as this goddess was for a long time in high esteem in *Syria*, her worship might naturally spread from city to city, and from province to province. From *Hieropolis* of *Syria*, it might naturally reach to *Hieropolis* in *Phrygia*; and from thence to *Apamæa* of the same province; which our antiquary judges to be the place where this coin was struck, from its neighbourhood to *Magnesia*; the citizens of both places being here jointly named.

BUT

BUT if I may be indulged a conjecture, in opposition to the opinion of this very learned antiquary, I own, I am more inclined to believe, that the *Apamæa* here meant, is that of *Mesopotamia*, because both *Herodian* and *Dio* mention *Severus's* being in that country; and, I think, one may fairly collect from *Dio*, that he sojourned in *Mesopotamia*, during the siege of *Byzantium*, which lasted three years. At least, it is certain, he was there when this city was taken: (and he by that means more confirmed in the empire) which was a proper occasion for the cities of that region to pay their compliments to him: —tho' there wanted not also another occasion of doing it, not long after; when he redeemed them from the invasion of the *Parthians*.

NOR is the union of the *Magnesian* and *Apamæan* on the same coin, any objection to this opinion; since this author hath himself furnished us with many instances of the names of very distant people joined on the same coin, from an *ὁμολογία* in religion, *i. e.* from a communion in religious worship. And this opinion is farther strengthened from the next coin of *Philippus Arabs*, which hath the word *ΝΩΕ*, inscribed on the side of the ark: which is allowed to be the name of *Noah* among the *Chaldeans*; and which
this

this learned writer doth himself believe to be so intended in this place : and hath taken care to shew that there is no room here for any suspicion of a *βαστορονδον*, i. e. a reading from the left hand ; tho' the learned Mr. *Saurin*, hath, thro' mistake (occasioned by the perplexity of *Falconerius's* stile in this place) imagined, that this eminent antiquary would have it so read Besides that the neighbourhood of *Arabia* to *Mesopotamia*, makes it probable, that a city of that region was more likely to compliment *Philippus Arabs*, sen. a native of their own neighbourhood, on his accession to the imperial throne, who was invested with the empire on the banks of the *Euphrates*, in a region not very remote, possibly in the neighbourhood of that very city.

ADD to all this, that tho' the inhabitants of *Mesopotamia* might have received the religion of the *Syrian* goddess, yet it is highly probable that the memory of *Noah* must still subsist, in a country where *Noah* himself, in all probability lived, and built the ark ; (as shall be shewn hereafter) and where *Babel*, the work of his sons, might naturally (tho' in ruins) preserve some memorial of him ; and our learned author doth, for many reasons, conclude both coins to be the work of one city.



DISSERTATION XV:

*Some difficulties relating to Noah's ark
considered.*



HERE are few things more apt to offend men of humble and upright dispositions, than the restless and unwearied industry of libertine spirits, to blast and to overthrow the credit of revelation, by all the laboured objections of absurdity, and impossibility, as well as by all the evil arts of cavil and calumny! — and yet when it is found upon enquiry, that these objections, never fail to end in new evidence, of the truths they were intended to oppose, nor these calumnies, but in the confusion and reproach of their authors; whilst we lament the destruction of these vain deluded mortals, we must be thankful to the great Governor of the world, for the infinite advantages, derived

ved from their arrogance, upon the humble believer.

How far, the objections I am now to recount, and the answers to them, will give just ground for this reflection, the reader will best judge.

IN the first place then, it is objected, That if *Noah* had been an hundred and twenty years, in preparing the ark (*i. e.* from the notice God gave him, that *his spirit should not strive with man*, beyond that space of time) as many divines have believed, and still do believe, the timbers must all have decayed, and perished before the end of that period.

To this I answer, That the objection is founded upon such gross ignorance, as I am almost ashamed to refute. Since it is notorious, that the timbers of many buildings, now extant, in this island, have vastly outlasted that period, undecayed; — and yet there are timbers, believed to be much more durable than oak. — The ark, is for very good reasons, believed both by *Fuller* and *Bockart*, to have been framed of cypress, the most durable wood in the known world; and the least liable to the impressions of air, and vermin: tho' if it had been less durable, the *asphaltus* with which it was sheathed,

258 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

both on the inside, and the out, may very well be supposed capable of preserving it, many centuries; as shall be shewn hereafter.

BESIDES this, I think, a considerable space of time, must be allowed, for collecting (not to say taming) the creatures to be preserved. Nay, some men have thought this so mighty a difficulty, that they have imagined it an unanswerable objection, against the *Mosaic* account of the deluge, as it is generally understood, *i. e.* against its being universal: inasmuch as some of the creatures, if you suppose them dispersed, as they are now, at great distances from the place where they were created, could not, (as they think) return to that region where the ark was built, in less than twenty thousand years*.

BUT this objection confutes itself; because at that rate of travelling, they could not have reached the regions in which they are now found, to this day.

BUT this point will, I think, be fairly cleared in a few words. — The country of *Eden* is very reasonably supported by learned men to be next adjacent to the garden of

* See *Vossius* as he is quoted by Mr. *Saurin*, in his discourse on the deluge, *octavo*, p. 99.

that name, from whence *Adam* was exiled; and as all the early accounts of that country, paint it out to us as one of the most fruitful and delicious regions of the earth, tho' now greatly changed) there is no reason to imagine that *Adam* sought for any habitation beyond it.

WHEN *Cain* slew his brother, he was exiled from thence; and he and his descendants sought their dwellings elsewhere; but there is all the reason in the world to believe, that *Seth*, and his descendants, continued in their father *Adam's* abode, and the regions adjacent: and as *Noah* was a descendant from *Seth*, in a direct line, there is no doubt but, that he dwelt in that country, or not far from it, that is, not far from *Babylon*: for that the ark was built thereabouts, many circumstances concur to persuade us. There, is *Gopher* wood (very reasonably supposed to be cypress) found in abundance. — There also, is the *asphaltus*, with which the ark was fenced from the impression of the waters, both on the outside and the in. — And not very far from thence, is *Ararat*, whither the ark may very naturally be supposed to be carried by the swelling of the waters from the sea, when *the fountains of the deep were broken up*. — And in that situation, there is not the least reason to imagine, that any one

Species of animals was out of *Noah's* reach. Whereas, if he had been at any great distance from *Arabia* (supposing the earth nearly circumstanced as it is now) I think some difficulties might arise, in relation to the wild ass, and the ostrich, no where else found that I know of.

THE next difficulty that occurs, is in relation to the capacity of the ark: which some men imagine too small to contain all the *species* of creatures, with sufficient food for a year.

BUT this point, hath been so fully discussed and cleared, by *Buteo*, Sir *Walter Raleigh*, Bishop *Wilkins*, and many other men of great abilities, — able naturalists, and skilful computers, that I have nothing to do but to refer the reader to their works, for full satisfaction upon this head: — and yet I cannot but observe, how providential it is, that this objection to divine revelation, should be urged, in an age, when a more ample discovery of several new regions of the world, and a most exact and diligent enquiry into the nature and number of the several kinds of animals all over the earth, have sufficiently shewn how ill it is founded.

I HAVE little to add upon this point, (and indeed I imagine, that little can be added),
and

— and therefore I shall only beg leave to observe, that the moderate dimensions allowed by *Moses* for the ark, is to me a convincing proof of his veracity; a vessel which was to contain a certain number of the kinds of all land animals upon the face of the earth, with sufficient food for so long a space, every one imagines at first sight, should be prodigious; — and therefore, when we hear *Moses* relate the dimensions of it, directed by God, — the length three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty, and the height thirty, without giving himself the least trouble to explain, or to account for any objections, that might rise against it; How is this to be accounted for, but from a consciousness of truth? Falshood, or conjecture, would have taken good care to be on the sure side. — A man who had written from rational conjecture, would naturally have been carried to support his hypothesis with reasons, and computations: and a man who had written at adventures, or upon any other foundation than certainty, would have been very apt to have enlarged; — probably more than double these dimensions; and nothing but certain knowledge, could have treated a subject of so much importance, at once with so much simplicity, and unconcern.

IF men chuse to ascribe that knowledge to certain information derived from *Noah*,

rather than immediately from God, I shall not contend with them upon that account: but if any man, doubt or deny that the dimensions assigned by *Moses*, are just, his sure way of justifying his doubts, will be by attempting to confute *Moses* upon this head: which if he shall think fit to do, in a publick manner, I here venture to assure him before-hand, that he will be made, I mean, that he will make himself, pitiable in point of ignorance to his fondest admirers; and utterly contemptible and ridiculous to the rest of mankind.

I CANNOT quit this subject, without taking notice of the unnecessary pains, some ingenious men have been at, to provide flesh for the support of the carnivorous animals shut up in the ark: when it is beyond all controversy, that the stomachs of all carnivorous animals, are fitted for the digestion of fruits and vegetables; and that such food would be more salutary, both for them and their keepers, and create a less demand of drink, throughout the course of so long a confinement: and possibly God's foreknowledge of the wisdom, and, perhaps, the necessity, of confining *Noah* and his companions to a vegetable diet, for so long a time, was one wise reason, among others, of not granting flesh for human food, before the flood. — And as no provision of flesh

was necessary, either for himself, or the carnivorous creatures that were with him, on that occasion, there is not the least foundation from the text to believe, that any such provision was made; or that more than seven animals of any one species, were taken into the ark.

THERE is one difficulty still remaining, and that is, that the defenders of revelation suppose the remains of the ark to have lasted so many centuries after the flood: nay, *Chrysostom* speaks of this as a thing past all doubt in his time. — A duration which is thought utterly impossible, and consequently, incredible.

To this I beg leave to answer, That if these gentlemen had thoroughly enquired into the nature of *asphaltus*, and the testimonies of antiquity, as well as later observations in relation to the duration of timbers, they would either decline this objection, or lay much less stress upon it.

SIR *Walter Raleigh* quotes *Pliny's* testimony on his head, in the following manner, — (l. i. ch. 7. p. 86.) “ *Pliny* affirmeth that in *Egypt* it was the use to build ships of cedar, which the worms eat not; and he avoweth, that he saw in *Utica*, in the temple of *Apollo*, cedar beams, laid in

“ the time of the foundation of the city; and
 “ that they were still found in his time, which
 “ was about 1188 years after.”

WE are also assured by some late very curious and learned travellers, that mummies, undoubtedly prepared and deposited by the ancient *Egyptians*, are found in coffins of sycamore wood, the timber of which is still found; tho' lying under-ground, for at least, two thousand years.

Now sycamore must, I believe, be allowed less durable than cedar, as cedar is esteemed less durable than cypress * — Now if this sycamore, which lasts thus long, unprotected, were sheathed with *asphaltus*, I think it might very reasonably be supposed capable of enduring from the foundation of the world to this day, — it being the known property of *asphaltus*, to harden in the air, and yet more in the water: and to give security and durability, to all kinds of bodies, infinitely beyond any thing that ever was heard of.

* See the testimonies of antiquity concerning the duration of cypress in *Fuller's Miscell. sacra*, l. 4. c. 5. and *Bochart's Phaleg*. l. 1. c. 4. — and this doubtless was the foundation of the poetical fable that *Jove's* scepter was made of cypress; to imply the perpetuity of his empire.

WE know that when *Nitocris* joined the new and the old palace in *Babylon* by an arch, she first secured the top of it with a good coat of *asphaltus*, and then turned the river over it: well knowing that water could neither penetrate nor wash it away. — It is also well known, that *Nebuchadnezzar* secured the great arches, which supported his penfile gardens, with a covering of reeds, smeared over with *asphaltus*: and some late travellers (who, I am persuaded, never heard of this account of *Nebuchadnezzar*) report, that layers of these reeds are found still entire among the ruins of that great city; covered (as they call it) with *the earth of the country*.

Now if other timbers last so long without *asphaltus*, and reeds with it, is there any thing incredible in the account we have of the duration of some parts of the ark? — So far from it, — that, for my own part, I am much more inclined to credit the very latest accounts we have of this matter. And those, if I mistake not, are from the travels of *Benjamin the Jew*, who is thus quoted by *Bochart*, (*Phal.* l. i. c. 3.) *Ita Benjamin Judæus scribit, se Nisibi profectum, biduo venisse*, (the reader will, I hope, excuse me for not troubling him with the *Hebrew*) *ad insulam filii Omar, quæ est in medio Tigride,*
ad

266 REVELATION *Examin'd, &c.*

ad radices montium Ararat : unde quatuor distat, millibus locus in quo requievit arca Noë. Addit Omarem Alcitabi filium arcæ reliquias ex illo monte in insulam transtulisse, & fabricasse ex illis templum quoddam Mahometanum.

IN *English* thus;

“ LIKEWISE Benjamin the Jew writes,
 “ that he came in two days journey from
 “ *Nisibis* to *Omars* island, which is in the
 “ midst of the *Tygris*, at the bottom of the
 “ mountains of *Ararat*; at four miles dis-
 “ tance from the place where *Noah's* ark
 “ rested. He adds, that *Omar*, the son of
 “ *Alcitab*, removed the remains of the ark
 “ from that mountain, into the island, and
 “ built a kind of *Mahometan* temple out of
 “ them.”

How far this account is credible or incredible (in point of possibility of the timber's duration for so long a period), the reader will best judge from what has already been said, and referred to, upon that point.

THE only appearance of a remaining difficulty, is, whether cypress be a proper timber for shipping; and that it is remarkably good and fit for that purpose, and was always accounted so, *Bockart* proves, (*ibid.*)
 beyond

beyond all possibility of doubt, by a great number of quotations.

HAVING considered these difficulties relating to the ark, I hope, I shall be indulged in considering two new difficulties, relating to the flood; which I had not the good fortune to meet with, till my dissertations on that subject were printed.

THE first is this, — that the *Strata* of the earth are not always found in the order of their specifick gravities: — and consequently, this state of things is owing to some other cause, and not the deluge; — because, there, the *Strata* which are supposed to be washed off, must have subsided according to their specifick gravities; — whereas now, layers of sand, which is heavier, are frequently found over layers of marle, which is lighter.

I ANSWER, That little particular exceptions of this kind, are so far from impeaching the main truth of the deluge, that they confirm it: For as this vast flood of waters, did not abate at once, but gradually, things could only subside in such a manner, as was consistent with the continual agitation of tides and winds, for so long a space. — All tides are in the nature of floods: and when agitated with winds, and working
down

268 REVELATION *Examin'd*, &c.

down the sides of mountains, must of necessity produce the same effects with other floods; that is, they must disturb the ordinary regular state of things; and as naturally throw layers of sand upon lighter *Strata*, as floods now throw layers of sand upon meadows: — And therefore that which is, and must be, a necessary consequence of the flood, can never be a just or a reasonable objection to its existence.

THE next objection is this; — That oysters, and other shell-fish are found in such vast quantities on the tops of some mountains, that it is not to be imagined how they should be so numerous, unless they had bred there. *

THAT is — a strange effect, which could be produced no imaginable way, but by the deluge, is made an objection to its cause. — If one shell-fish could be thrown upon the top of a mountain by the deluge, why not a thousand? Why should not the same cause, operating the same way, upon the same matter, produce the same effect in a thousand, in ten thousand instances, as well as one, — if we suppose materials enough to be operated upon? And that there

* See *Ray's* consequences of the deluge.

were then shell-fish enough in the sea, to be thrown up on the tops of mountains, is I believe not doubted.

BUT, after all, — why might not these creatures, be allowed to have multiplied upon the tops of mountains during that period? — The business of drowning the world, seems to have been over in forty days; and the waters were upon the tops of the mountains for some months after this, — if we consider the duration of some of the beds of these animals, and the perpetual supplies they afford to great cities, for so many years together, we shall have reason to believe, that they not only multiply very fast, but come soon to maturity — at least, many of them may well be supposed adhering to the parent-shell, at this time, as at all others: and these may at least be allowed time enough to come to perfection, before the end of the flood; and might, for ought I know, be manifold the number of their parents.

BESIDES all this, — Might not many of these hills have hollows on their summits, as thousands are seen to have at this day? And might not the waters there deposited, continue for some months more, if not years, in a condition good enough to support these creatures? — And what if great numbers of these creatures are now found upon mountains,

tains, where no such hollows are seen:—mountains are agreed to abate in their height; and why might not continual rains for such a series of centuries, have washed off these mounds, where this water was deposited at the flood; and so left the summits of those mountains bare, and dry?

ALL this, might, nay must have happened, in many instances: And therefore all these objections, are still further and stronger confirmations of the truth of the *Mosaic* history. And if this history, in this instance, the least credible of any thing in the whole compass of revelation, be true, the infidel should, methinks be fortified with abundant evidence, before he disclaims any other part of it.

AND here I make an end both of collecting testimonies, and considering objections, relating to the flood. — What weight these objections have, and these testimonies should have, the reader will best judge; ——— testimonies, so numerous, so various, so unconcerted, and yet so connected — is it possible that they can deceive? Could all nations, conspire with all nations, and all ages, with all ages, to impose upon themselves, and their posterity! Could the religion of the true God, and the religion of
the

the *Syrian* goddesses, the *Jews*, and the *Heathens*, that hated them *Moses*, and *Melo* his enemy; — tradition conspire with history, and history with mythology! men of all characters, complexions, conditions and persuasions, *Plutarch* with *Berosus*, *Benjamin* the *Jew* with *Chrysostom*, and *Lucian* with both! — *Plato* with *Pliny*, and *Dio* with *Falconerius*! the imaginations of poets, and the experiments of naturalists! antiquity, poetry, philosophy, and philology, — wisdom, and folly! truth, and fiction! — regions unknown to one another! and regions that never heard of one another! the *Greeks*, and the *Hottentots*! *Asia* with the isles of the *Gentiles*! and *America* with both! — all conspire to establish one universal delusion; and all nature join in the attestation! produce all her animals, — and all her vegetables, — all her heights, and all her depths, — her mountains, her vales, her levels, — to vouch one universal lye, with all the irresistible evidence of truth!

FORGIVE me, infidelity, if I could as soon disbelieve my own existence! —
 Forgive me, if I could sooner suspect your veracity and wisdom: — Forgive me, if I could as soon believe the most monstrous position that ever was advanced. — Forgive me, in one word, if I could almost as soon,

soon, believe, that there is not, never was nor ever will be, one man, of thorough learning, true virtue, a sound head, and an upright heart, throughout the whole tribe of those great lights and ornaments of human nature, — the professed enemies of Revelation!

The End of VOL. I.



CON-



THE
CONTENTS.

Dissertation I.



Of the forbidden fruit,

page 1

Dissertation II.

*Concerning the knowledge of the brute world
conveyed to Adam.*

p. 11

Dissertation III.

Of the knowledge of marriage given to Adam.
p. 28

Dissertation IV.

Of the skill of language infus'd into Adam.
P. 34.

Dissertation V.

*Of the revelations which immediately follow'd
the fall.* P. 43

Dissertation VI.

*Concerning some difficulties and objections
that lie against the Mosaic account of the
fall.* p. 69

Dissertation VII.

*Some farther difficulties relating to the fall
considered.* P. 98

Dissertation VIII.

Of sacrifices. p. 121
Differ-

The CONTENTS. 275

Dissertation IX.

Concerning that corruption and degeneracy of mankind, which drew down the divine judgment in the deluge. p. 154

Dissertation X.

Concerning the natural causes made use of by Almighty God to flood the earth. p. 171

Dissertation XI.

Concerning the ends of divine wisdom answered by the deluge. p. 183

Dissertation XII.

Objections to the Mosaic account of the deluge, and this explication of it considered. p. 206

Dissertation XIII.

Of the concurrence of all antiquity with the Mosaic account of the flood. p. 215

Dissertation XIV.

Of other testimonies relating to the deluge.
P. 238

Dissertation XV.

Some difficulties relating to Noah's ark considered.









